CHILD SOLDIERS IN INTRASTATE CONFLICTS: AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

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AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

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In my dissertation I seek to answer the question of why some non-state armed groups in modern conflicts recruit children whereas others do not. I argue that four factors help explain the difference in rebels' recruitment of minors. The first two are related to the armed group-specific characteristics of *fighting capacity* relative to the government and the scope of belligerents' *territorial access* and control within and across the conflict country borders. Both of these factors positively affect the insurgency's propensity to recruit children, especially for armed groups that are unpopular among their constituency. The third and fourth contextual and individual factors of *poverty* and presence of *ethnic persecution* in a country, I argue, also have a positive influence on the outcome of child recruitment, especially for popular insurgencies. My findings are based on both quantitative and qualitative research. I conducted large-*N* tests on a dataset of 112 insurgencies that I newly compiled. I also analyzed data which I collected on Liberian armed groups and former underage combatants from the surveys which I administered in the field. I complemented my statistical analysis with comparative and process-tracing temporal case studies, as well as the plausibility probe on FARC armed group from Colombia and the LTTE faction of Sri Lanka.

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PREFACE

I would like to thank my dissertation committee and especially Simon Reich for their invaluable advice during my scientific explorations. I am grateful that I had a chance to learn about academic standards and methodology from such teachers as Simon Reich and Barry Ames. My participation in Dr. Reich's and Dr. Carpenter's classes shaped my interest in human security and the approach to the problem. I also thank Charli Carpenter for being a highly inspirational example of a successful female scholar. I thank Dr. Keller and Dr. Ban for jumping on board of my Committee Membership and providing me with useful insights from the fields of international security and public policy.

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I would like to say a special thank you to the Peace Research Institute of Oslo and the Director of its Center for the Study of Civil Wars, Scott Gates, for providing me with funding and six months of refuge. My dissertation benefited enormously from residing in the outstanding working environment within the intellectual community of armed conflict experts from the Institute and other Norwegian and international scholars and practitioners working with the Institute. I thank all PRIOits who have familiarized themselves with my work and gave me comments. I thank all practitioners from the Norwegian IDP Council and the Red Cross with whom I had a chance to talk.

I would also like to thank two anonymous employees of the UN Office of the Special Representative for Children in Armed Conflict for their shared stories of the work of international organizations in the field. I am also indebted to many IO and NGO employees in New York, Washington, Geneva and Brussels, such as UNICEF, Human Rights Watch, ICRC, UNHCR, ILO, CSUCS, Save the Children, and Pax Christi among others.

In this dissertation I utilize both the data which I collected and the existing large-N statistical databases. While I would like to thank all of the researchers whose previously collected data on armed conflicts allowed me to conduct my tests, I am especially indebted to Kristian Gleditsch and David Cunningham, who shared their newly collected and unpublished dataset with me.

I would like to offer special thanks to the Liberian former child soldiers who participated in my survey and interviews and shared their uneasy stories and biographies and provided me with the invaluable insights into the Liberian conflict and the experiences of children in war. I am thankful to all the enumerators who helped me with the surveys in the field, but especially so to Benjamin Elliott, Bill

Aloysius, and Augustine Lekpyee. I thank a friend, practitioner and researcher, Artyom Izmestiev, for providing immense logistical help on the ground while in Ghana.

This dissertation project would not be possible without an encouraging support from my family and friends. Special thanks go to my husband Martin, my mother Olga, and my aunt and uncle, Natasha and Andrei. I thank my cousin-in-law Elena Charapova for helping me stay organized and serving as an inspirational example of completing the projects once started. I thank my friend and writer Jennifer O'Reilly for her editorial help, and her and Gabrielle for believing in the end of this project. Lisha receives a special thank you and a space in my heart forever for being with me throughout the writing process.

Chapter 1: Introduction

A tremendous variance in the manifestation of child recruitment practice occurs across different non-state armed groups of diverse intrastate wars, when controlled for conflict duration, intensity, and type. For example, in protracted high intensity civil wars with the government, the Sudan's SPLA, on the one hand, was estimated to have over 20,000 children in its ranks towards the end of the war of 1985-2005, while the Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement (EPDM), on the other hand, was not found to engage in recruitment of minors during the country's 1980-91 severe internal armed struggle.[1] Similarly, during its long-lasting but low-intensity secessionist conflict in Angola between 1985 and 2006, the Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda (FLEC), as well as its factions, were all found to recruit children extensively.[2] At the same time, the separatist Movement of Democratic Forces in the Casamance (MFDC) of Senegal, in its protracted but mild insurgency of 1990-2006 against government forces, was reported to have children in supportive roles only occasionally.[3]

What is it that differs so much in the otherwise more or less comparable military organizations of the SPLA and the EPDM that leads to opposite patterns of their child soldier recruitment? Similarly, what could have made or allowed the Angolan secessionist movement of FLEC to recruit children in contrast to its Senegalese counterpart of the MFDC? This variation in child soldier recruitment practices by armed groups generates the following research question, which is addressed in this dissertation: *Why do some insurgencies recruit children whereas others do not* or, equivalently, *why do some rebels have more children in their ranks than others*?

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[1] "From 2001 to April 2006 an estimated 20,000 children from the SPLA were demobilized and returned to their families and communities with UNICEF support" (UNICEF, "UNICEF Welcomes Child Demobilisation in Southern Sudan," 24 April 2006, http://www.unicef.org/media/media_33579.html). I could not locate any report on recruitment of children for the EPDM. The average intensity of the Sudanese conflict was calculated to be 1.83 on the scale between 1 (minor intensity) and 2 (full scale war). The calculation procedure for the *conflict intensity* index is described in Chapter 4 of this dissertation on methodology. On the same scale, the average conflict intensity for the EPDM in Ethiopia was estimated to equal 2.

[2] CSUCS, "Angola," *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008*, p. 46. Conflict intensity for the Angolan struggle between government and FLEC equaled 1 (minor intensity). The calculation procedure for the *conflict intensity* index is described in Chapter 4 of this dissertation on methodology.

[3] According to the CSUCS, "The extent to which children were associated with the MFDC was not documented, although it appeared that there was no widespread recruitment of children" (CSUCS, "Senegal," in *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008,* p. 293). The following account of an independent researcher supports this claim of the CSUCS: "There is no evidence of impressment of child fighters of the kind witnessed in Sierra Leone and Uganda, and the MFDC was probably sincere in its denial, through a spokesman in Gambia in April 2004, that this occurs. However, there are accounts of child maquisards, albeit not as frontline combatants: a reliable eyewitness in Bissau during the 1998–99 civil war said that among the Front Sud contingent bolstering Mané's forces were a number of young teenagers, 13–15 years old, who carried out support operations such as transporting munitions" (Martin Evans, "Senegal: Mouvement des Forces Démocratiques de la Casamance (MFDC)," Briefing Paper (Chatham House, Africa Programme, Armed Non-State Actors Project, AFP BP 04/02, December 2004), p. 7). Conflict intensity for the MFDC insurgency in Senegal equaled 1 (minor intensity). The calculation procedure for the *conflict intensity* index is described in Chapter 4 on methodology.

The Child Soldier Problem, Puzzle, and Research Question

Awareness of the *child soldiers* phenomenon has recently grown around the world.[4] Many are familiar these days with images of gun-wielding children from photos in newspaper articles and on book covers, as well as from internet and TV.[5] As probably intended, these pictures shock the Western audience typically perceiving childhood as innocent and naïve. No matter how exaggerated, however, such visual depictions of child soldiers do reflect one side of today's reality: minors are used as fighters and foot soldiers in modern conflicts and actively participate in horrific atrocities inherent in armed struggle. The fact that the first U.S. serviceman killed in combat in Afghanistan "was fatally shot by a 14-year-old boy" was alarming for the American army.[6] Even more disturbing was the assessment of the situation on the ground by military observers, who reported that units containing child soldiers were carrying out a "much higher" number of human rights violations in and outside of the battlefields.[7] Rwandan history bears evidence to this claim: in the infamous 1994 genocide in the country, whether forced or not, children were found alongside adults perpetrating massacres, with some being charged with killing up to ninety civilians.[8] Hence, it is no wonder that when several international workers were trapped in the Democratic Republic of Congo's (DRC) conflict in 2004, their biggest fear was of armed children, not of flying bullets or artillery shelling.[9]

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[4] In this study a *child soldier* is defined as a person below the age of 18 "who participates actively in a violent conflict as a member of an organization that applies violence in a systematic way." This formulation is based on the working definition employed in Jens Christopher Andvig and Scott Gates, "Recruiting Children for Armed Conflict," Working Paper, 2007, p. 2. To the Andvig and Gates' definition I added the restriction on age, which they avoid on purpose but which is embedded in the working definition used by international organizations. For the discussion of potential methodological problems related to this definition, as well as for the texts of other definitions of a *child soldier*, please see Chapter 4 of this dissertation on methodology.

[5] For examples of such images please refer to the photos accompanying the following articles: Mark Doyle, "Call to Help Liberia's Child Soldiers," *BBC News*, February 2, 2004, http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/3450263.stm; Lydia Polgreen, "A Master Plan Drawn in Blood," *New York Times*, April 2, 2006, http://www.wehaitians.com/a%20master%20plan%20drawn%20in%20blood.html; Mike Pflanz, "Rwanda Recruited Child Soldiers for Congo Rebels," *Telegraph*, December 11, 2008, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/rwanda/3708901/Rwanda-recruited-child-soldiers-for-Congo-rebels.html. The identical photo of a Liberian teenager in full combat gear appeared on at least two book covers: one on the book by the British journalist Mark Huband, *The Liberian Civil War* (London and Portland, OR: Frank Cass Publishers, 1998), and the other on the book by Ilene Cohn and Guy S. Goodwin-Gill's book called *Child Soldiers: The Role of Children in Armed Conflict* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994).

[6] Among many sources that reported this incident was Carin Zissis, "Children in Camo: Underage Warriors Become Growing Concern," *Fox News*, October 14, 2005, http://www.foxnews.com/printer_friendly_story/0,3566,172173,00.html, accessed on May 6, 2006.

[7] Centre for Emerging Threats and Opportunities, Marine Corps Warfighing Laboratory, "Child Soldiers: Implications for U.S. Forces," Seminar Report, November 2002, CETO 005-02.

[8] Jimmie Briggs, *Innocents Lost: When Child Soldiers Go to War* (Basic Books, 2005), p. 18.

[9] Dr. Samantha Nutt, a Canadian physician and professor, was among fifteen foreigners who stayed at the hotel in Bukavu when one night it found itself in the midst of an armed skirmish. The following is her recollection of the event shared in her interview with the University of Toronto Magazine: "I wasn't concerned about bullets flying through windows. I wasn't even all that concerned about a mortar hitting our location, although that was a possibility… I was more concerned that Mai-Mai Congolese [child] soldiers or Rwandan rebel [child] soldiers were

As perpetrators, child soldiers became the issue on the pages and screens of current media. On the mandates of international and nongovernmental organizations (IOs and NGOs), however, they are appearing typically as victims of adult masterminded wars and military strategy. Besides promoting such position in their documents, activists also resort to images which depict child soldiers as guiltless and childlike.[10] Similarly, some IOs and NGOs refuse to use the term 'child soldiers' and instead employ an alternative expression 'children associated with armed (or fighting) forces'.[11] The perception of child soldiers as victims is supported by multiple stories of former underage warriors who were often recruited by force and pushed into the toughest war circumstances, against their will. Such are the accounts of many Liberian child ex-combatants whom I interviewed in 2008. Besides ubiquitous instances of everyday beatings, rape (both female and male children), killings on military bases and in combat alike, many of my informants had to go through even more horrifying experiences, if a comparative scale can be attributed to such events. Some witnessed the rape of sisters, mothers, and grandmothers; while others saw their parents beheaded. One informant reported being made to drink acid while another had his ears cut off after trying to escape the faction.

Besides such testimonies, the attention of the IOs to the problem of underage recruitment is fuelled by troublesome statistics on a wide scale. The severity of the child soldier tragedy is indeed immense. Between 2004 and 2007, over 70 military organizations in 19 countries and territories around the world were recruiting and using children in armed hostilities.[12] In 2001, child soldiers constituted some 10% of all active combatants in the world.[13] Children are recruited by government and rebel forces alike, and

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going to show up in the hotel armed to the teeth with their semi-automatic weapons and start killing people or raping people… That's what you worry about. Because you do not want to be stuck with a 12-year old pointing a gun at you. You just don't" (Stacey Gibson, "Witness to War," *University of Toronto Magazine*, Autumn 2007, p. 25).

[10] For 'innocent' images of child soldiers please see photos on cover pages and inside of the following reports: International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), *Child Soldiers* (Geneva: ICRC, July 2003), http://www.icrc.org/Web/Eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/p0824/$File/ICRC_002_0824.PDF!Open; Jeannie Annan, Christopher Blattman and Roger Horton, *The State of Youth and Youth Protection in Northern Uganda: Findings from the Survey for War Affected Youth* (Uganda: UNICEF, September 2006), http://www.sway-uganda.org/SWAY.Phase1.FinalReport.pdf; Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers (CSUCS), *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008* (London, UK: CSUCS, 2008), http://www.childsoldiersglobalreport.org (see images in the photo gallery of this report).

[11] For example, in its documents the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) often uses the term 'children associated with armed forces' (CAAF) instead of 'child soldiers'. The issue is also defined in similar language in the Paris Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups. Other organizations, such as Small Arms Survey group, also employ the CAFF as a more neutral definition of child soldiers.

[12] The number of countries where children were used in conflicts is taken from the following source: CSUCS, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008*, p. 2. The number of military organizations that used children in these countries' armed struggles was also obtained from the same source. Note that in the cited 19 countries children were actively participating in military hostilities. Otherwise, the military recruitment of youth under 18 years old "takes place in one form or another in at least 86 countries and territories worldwide" (CSUCS, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008*, p. 12).

[13] Peter W. Singer, "Caution: Children at War," *Parameters*, Vol. XXXI, No. 4, Winter 2001-2002, http://www.brookings.edu/~/media/Files/rc/articles/2001/1201usmilitary_singer/20011203singer.pdf, pp. 40-56.

often serve in paramilitary, militia or self-defense armed groups backed by state authorities.[14] Child soldiers appear in militarized conflicts across Africa, Asia, Latin America, and are playing an increasingly important role in armed struggles of the Middle East.[15] While the overall number of underage warriors in the world cannot be determined with a high degree of precision, estimates broken down by countries offer more trustworthy, staggering figures. For example, in 2003, about 70,000 children were serving in Myanmar government forces alone.[16] A conservative estimate of 40,000 was reported as the number of children who have been involved in the Angolan armed conflict of 1975-2002.[17] During the demobilization process in the DRC between 2003 and 2006, some 30,000 underage soldiers were released from both regular military units and insurgent armed groups.[18]

The nature of recruitment varies from conflict to conflict and from one armed group to another. The existing studies based on interviews and mini-surveys show different prevalence of *forced conscription*, *abduction* and *voluntary enlistment* of children in various conflict situations.[19] A survey of child ex-combatants from Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia, for example, revealed that 40% of these children were abducted, 40% were forcibly recruited, and only 20% joined voluntarily.[20] A somewhat different conclusion was reached by a study of the International Labor Office (ILO), however, in which 36% of

[14] In Angola, for instance, up to one third of the government forces were children (Vera Achvarina and Simon Reich, "No Place to Hide: Refugees, Displaced Persons, and the Recruitment of Child Soldiers," *International Security*, Vol. 31, No. 1 (Summer 2006), pp. 127–164, at p. 129). Somalia and Zimbabwe are just two examples of countries where the government, which was not recruiting minors itself, did support militia and paramilitaries that engaged in child soldier use practice (CSUCS, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2004* (London, UK: CSUCS, 2004), p. 13).

[15] United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), *Adult Wars, Child Soldiers* (Bangkok: UNICEF, October 2002), http://www.unicef.org/eapro/AdultWarsChildSoldiers.pdf, p.8.

[16] The Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers (CSUCS), *Child Soldier Use 2003: A Briefing for the 4th UN Security Council Open Debate on Children and Armed Conflict*, 16 January 2004, http://www.centrodirittiumani.unipd.it/a_news/rapporto.pdf, p. 2.

[17] Christian Children's Fund (CCF), "Peace in Angola Brings Critical Needs," July 11, 2002, www.christianchildrensfund.org/emergencies/angola_ peace (last accessed in 2008).

[18] UN Security Council, "Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo," S/2007/391, June 28, 2007, http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N07/390/16/PDF/N0739016.pdf?OpenElement, p. 12.

[19] In my work I conceptually distinguish between three different types of recruitment, following a study by the International Labor Office (ILO) on former child combatants. The ILO report identifies *abduction*, that "refers to situations in which children have been taken forcibly or under threat of arms"; *forced conscription,* that involves "cases in which the child did not have a choice" and joined "because of moral pressure or the obligation to enlist"; and *voluntary decision*, that signifies the situations "whereby the child took the initiative to become a member of the armed group" ("The Use of Children in Armed Conflict in Central Africa: from Recruitment to Release," Chapter 3, in International Labor Office (ILO), *Wounded Childhood: The Use Of Children In Armed Conflict In Central Africa* (Geneva: ILO, 2003), p. 27).

[20] Christina Wille, "Children Associated with Fighting Forces (CAFF) and Small Arms in the Mano River Union (MRU)," p. 187, in Nicolas Florquin and Eric G. Berman, eds., *Armed and Aimless: Armed Groups, Guns and Human Security in the ECOWAS Region* (Geneva: Small Arms Survey, 2005).

former child soldiers from Burundi, Congo-Brazaville, DRC and Rwanda reported being forcibly recruited or abducted, whereas 64% admitted voluntary enlistment.[21]

During their time with armed groups, child soldiers perform different roles varying most frequently over the following duties: "participation in combat, laying mines and explosives; scouting, spying, acting as decoys, couriers or guards; training, drill or other preparations; logistics and support functions, portering, cooking and domestic labour."[22] Sexual abuse is yet another facet of life of child soldiers. Most of the children recruited are boys, but girls also end up with armed factions, representing roughly about 20 to 25% of all child soldiers.[23] According to one influential study on girl soldiers, from 1990 to 2003 underage females participated in military organizations of 55 countries, with direct conflict involvement in 38 of them.[24] Sexual slavery is apparently not the only or exclusive role that girls are assigned to by their commanders; in 34 countries they were reported to serve as combat fighters.[25] Ages of child soldiers vary across armed groups, with the average falling somewhere between 12 and 16, and in some extreme instances going as low as six years old.[26]

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In response to the problem of child soldiers, a series of international protocols and Security Council Resolutions were issued in an attempt to eliminate recruitment of minors.[27] In 1998, a number of well-

[21] ILO, *Wounded Childhood*, p. 27. Conclusions of such studies, however, should be interpreted with caution. The reason for that has been expressed by many fieldworkers and sometimes authors of the reports themselves – that being a tendency of demobilized children to tell the "forced recruitment" story as opposed to "voluntary participation" narrative in an attempt to downplay their agency and appear as non-perpetrators of violence.
[22] CSUCS, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008*, p. 411.
[23] This estimate comes from my analysis of conflicts for which I had data on gender distribution among child soldiers. These data are based on both observers' opinions and surveys and should probably be treated as the low estimate, because the latter would have a tendency to have fewer females in the study samples due to general unwillingness of girls to report their participation with armed groups.
[24] Susan McKay and Dyan Mazurana, *Where are the Girls? Girls in Fighting Forces in Northern Uganda, Sierra Leone and Mozambique: Their Lives During and After War* (Montreal: Rights and Democracy: International Center for Human Rights and Democratic Development, 2004), p. 14.
[25] Ibid., p. 14.
[26] For example, the average age of recruitment reported by former child soldiers in Sierra Leone was around 12, "compared with ages 14 in Liberia and 16 in Guinea" (Wille, "Children Associated with Fighting Forces (CAFF) and Small Arms in the Mano River Union (MRU)," p. 186). The average age of recruited youth in Uganda demonstrated a mid-range between 12 and 16 as it converged somewhere around 14 years old, according to Blattman: "The distribution of abduction age in the sample indicates that three times as many males aged 14 were abducted as those aged 9 or 23" (Christopher Blattman, "Causes of Child Soldiering: The Evidence from Northern Uganda," Working Paper, 2007, p. 6). On the lowest reported age of child recruits please see Amnesty International (AI), "Help End the Use of Child Soldiers," http://www.amnestyusa.org/children/child-soldiers/background–help-end-the-use-of-child-soldiers/page.do?id=1191009. There were several boys among my survey informants who were recruited at an age close to six years old. Because they were very small and did not remember or knew the exact age at the time of recruitment, they provided an age estimate.
[27] The most important formal international conventions and protocols related to recruitment of children in armed conflicts are: Geneva Convention, *Additional Protocol I (API)* (relating to international armed conflicts), Article 77(2); *Additional Protocol II (APII)* (relating to non-international armed conflicts), Article 4(3)c; *Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC),* Article 38; *Rome Statute for an International Criminal Court (ICC),* Article 8 (on War

known NGOs formed the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers (CSUCS) to promote the most important of these documents – the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict.[28] In just a decade, by 2008, over three-quarters of all governments have signed, ratified or accepted the Optional Protocol.[29] With such formation of the collective expectation among states and the near universal consensus about the need to curb recruitment of minors into armed conflicts, child soldier practice, however, has not abated. On the contrary, as the evidence suggests, the number of conflicts using underage recruits rose from twenty in 2001 to twenty seven in 2004. Their subsequent drop to seventeen in 2008 was largely attributed to the decrease in armed hostilities in the world, rather than a changing practice of child recruiters.[30] Despite the significant moderation of the number of conflicts between 2004 and 2008, the number of governments that used children in militarized struggles decreased only by one from nine to eight.[31] This divergence between global initiatives and the actual compliance of governmental military organizations with regard to child soldier recruitment is indeed puzzling, especially when promotion of protocols and campaigns in other issue areas, such as women's rights or use of landmines, was followed by a favorable change in behavior of state actors.[32]

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crimes), section 2 b) (xxvi); *Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict* (OP-CRC-CAC), Article 4(1) and (2); the *African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC*); *the Paris Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups*. Most of these documents were listed in CSUCS, *Child Soldiers 1379 Report* (London, UK: CSUCS, November 2002), pp. 7, 8.

[28] The Coalition was headed by "a Steering Committee of six NGOs": Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, International Federation Terre des Hommes, International Save the Children Alliance, Jesuit Refugee Service, the Quaker United Nations Office-Geneva and World Vision International. The main goal of the Optional Protocol was to raise the minimum age for military recruitment and use in hostilities from 15 to 18 years. "The Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers has been formed in response to the failure of negotiations within the United Nations to agree a prohibition on keeping children out of armed forces" (Amnesty International (AI), "International Campaign Launched against the Use of Child Soldiers," *Amnesty International News*, Geneva, 30 June 1998, AI Index: ACT 76/01/98, p. 1).

[29] CSUCS, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008*, p. 12.

[30] For the number of countries using child soldiers in 2001 see Human Rights Watch (HRW), "U.N. Cites Child Recruiters but Omits Leading Offenders," *Human Rights News*, December 16, 2002, http://www.grandslacs.net/doc/2460.pdf. For the lack of significant progress by 2004 see, for example, Jo Becker, "Children as Weapons of War," in Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2004: Human Rights and Armed Conflict* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 2004), http://www.hrw.org/wr2k4/download/wr2k4.pdf, p. 219. On recent decline in the number of conflicts in the world refer to Human Security Center, The University of British Columbia, Canada, *Human Security Report 2005: War and Peace in the 21st Century* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005) and CSUCS*, Child Soldiers Global Report 2008*, p. 12.

[31] For the list of these governments in 2004 and 2008 see CSUCS, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2004*, p. 13, and CSUCS, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008*, p. 16.

[32] For an overview of the successful women suffrage campaign see Nitza Berkovitch, "From Motherhood to Citizenship: The Worldwide Incorporation of Women into the Public Sphere in the Twentieth Century," Ph.D. Dissertation, Stanford University, 1995. On the results achieved by the international anti-landmine initiative refer to "Promoting the Safety of People: Banning Anti-Personnel Landmines," Chapter 5, in Fen Osler Hampson, ed., *Madness in the Multitude: Human Security and World Disorder* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Richard

In the absence of compliance from states, the failure to comply on the part of non-state military actors can be anticipated. Not surprisingly, between the years of 2001 and 2007, the number of such organizations that used children in armed hostilities did not decrease.[33] What is not so obvious, however, is the fact that non-compliance occurred despite the recent relatively intensive attention to non-state actors from the international community regarding the issue of child soldiers. Non-state military organizations, which do not hold the right to sign international protocols under current international law, are pressed by IOs to express commitment to the 'universal consensus' against the use of children in armed hostilities by making a pledge to the designated United Nations' (UN) delegates and by issuing public communiqués to the people of their country.[34] These commitments are then monitored on the ground by the pertinent activist organizations, and violators are subject to public 'naming and shaming' in the UN Secretary-General's reports and to the prosecution by the International Criminal Court (ICC) or Special Courts, such as the one for Sierra Leone, in the most extreme cases.[35] Nevertheless, peace processes aside, the impact of such measures which include negotiations with rebel leaders and commanders, has been rather limited, "reaching only a few groups and benefiting relatively small numbers of children."[36]

Another perplexing observation about the phenomenon of child soldiers is the enormous variation in child soldiers' ratios relative to adult combatants in different conflicts. In the absence of any previous systematic data collection, I have examined numerous IO and NGO reports and compiled a new dataset for 19 African intrastate conflicts between 1975 and 2002 on child soldier ratios to all combatants in each of these conflicts. As Table 1 below reveals, child soldier ratios varied from 0 to 45%.[37] This heterogeneity prompts the question of *why some intrastate conflicts have larger share of child soldiers relative to all combatants than others.*

Price, "Reversing the Gun Sights: Transnational Civil Society Targets Land Mines," *International Organization* 52 (3), Summer 1998.

[33] In 2001 the number of military organizations (both government and non-state) that were reported to use child soldiers was 72 (HRW, "U.N. Cites Child Recruiters but Omits Leading Offenders"). It has declined only by two lowering to 70 in 2007 (CSUCS, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008*, p. 2). The number of government forces has not changed in this sample since 2001, suggesting that the number of non-state recruiters has not changed either.

[34] From my interview with an official from the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, United Nations, New York, April 2005.

[35] For more information on the measures developed by international activists to deal with non-state armed actors involved in recruitment of children see CSUCS, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2004* and CSUCS, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008*.

[36] CSUCS*, Child Soldiers Global Report 2008*, pp. 23, 22. Consider the following statement by the CSUCS on the lack of compliance of armed non-state actors with the international standards and efforts aimed at stopping the use of child soldiers: "Despite progress, the overall picture is one of armed groups that have ignored international law and standards, that renege on commitments, are resistant to pressure and persuasion, or have so far proved to be beyond the reach of efforts to end the involvement of children in conflict and political violence" (CSUCS*, Child Soldiers Global Report 2008*, p. 23).

[37] For a more detailed explanation of how this table was created refer to Achvarina and Reich, "No Place to Hide," pp. 141-144.

Table 1. Child Soldiers: Conflicts and Percentages, 1975-2002

Country and Conflict	*Child Sold #*	*Adult Sold #*	*Child Sold%*	*Country and Conflict*	*Child Sold #*	*Adult Sold #*	*Child Sold%*
Senegal (1990-95)	0		0%	Rwanda (1990-95)	17,500	70,000	25%
Senegal (1997-2001)	0		0%	Sierra Leone (1991-2000)	10,000	45,000	25%
South Africa (1966-78)	0		0%	Angola (1996-2002)	20,000	72,500	28%
South Africa (1979-88)	0		0%	Mozambique (1976-92)	25,498	92 881	28%
South Africa (1989-93)	0		0%	Liberia (1989-95)	17,500	60,000	29%
Niger (1990-97)	0		0%	Burundi (1995-99)	14,000	45,000	31%
Chad (1997-2002)	0		0%	Sudan (1993-2002)	15,700	40,000	39%
Angola (1975-94)	8,000	194,000	4%	DRC (1996-2001)	30,000	72,000	42%
Burundi (1993-93)	5,000	50,000	10%	Liberia (2000-02)	18,000	40,000	45%
Uganda (1994-2002)	10,000	74,000	14%				

A more insightful comparison of underage recruitment practice, however, can be performed across specific actors, not conflicts. It is possible that not all armed groups and forces engaged in the same armed struggle might recruit minors, as the following cases suggest. Consider that in Congo-Brazzaville, armed groups such as United Democratic Forces (FDU), Cocoes and Ntsiloulous were not found to be recruiting child soldiers during their existence in late 1990s, whereas the Ninjas were reported to engage in the practice quite actively.[38] Moreover, even if factions within the same conflict might all use child soldiers, as in the case of five Liberian armed groups participating in the country's first civil war of 1989-96, the child to adult ratios in these military organizations varied considerably. While the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) and Liberia Peace Council (LPC) represented the heaviest recruiters in terms of proportion of children to adults in their ranks, the United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy – Johnson faction (ULIMO-J) and the Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL) were the most moderate, with the United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy – Kromah faction (ULIMO-K) falling somewhere in between these two categories of 'high' and 'low' child to adult ratios.[39]

As the examples above of armed factions with child recruitment practice (such as the SPLA of Sudan or FLEC of Angola) and military organizations without minors in their ranks (such as and the EPDM of Ethiopia and MFDC of Senegal) demonstrated, child recruitment practices can also differ across insurgencies of different countries. This variation in child soldier recruitment practices by armed groups, both within countries and across conflicts, generates the following research question: *Why do some insurgencies recruit children whereas others do not* or, equivalently, *why do some rebels have more children in their ranks than others*?

[38] For recruitment of children into the Ninja militia see CSUCS, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2004,* p. 56.
[39] These data come from my fieldwork interviews and surveys of former Liberian child soldiers in Ghana, 2008. For more information on the assessment of relative recruitment of children across Liberian armed factions refer to case studies in Chapter 6 of this dissertation.

Argument

By comparing and contrasting different armed groups, I reveal and empirically test potential causes of their child recruitment. My explanatory framework consists of supply and demand factors determining the probability of child soldier recruitment. After conducting a statistical analysis of the large-*N* cross-insurgency dataset that I compiled and survey data on Liberian armed groups and former underage combatants which I collected in the field, as well as after performing comparative and process-tracing temporal case studies on the data from secondary sources and my own interviews, I argue that four factors for child soldiers explain the difference in rebels' behavior in relation to recruitment of minors. Below I review two of these demand driven explanations, and two supply-based factors.

First, I contend that recruitment of children is more likely for armed groups whose ***fighting capacity*** is high. The variable of rebels' *fighting capacity* relative to the opponent is defined as insurgents' ability to challenge the government and prevail in combat. The variable of *fighting capacity* serves as an indicator of the presence of intense fighting in the country, for which one may expect high battle related casualties and exigent need for additional numbers of soldiers. In addition, in conflicts of high intensity the supply of adults diminishes for many reasons. On the one hand, a wide scale conflict requires large numbers of foot soldiers to perform intense military operations and maintain a necessary level of fighting; on the other hand it leads to numerous battle deaths and civilian casualties alike. Therefore, the intense fighting generates both the higher demand for additional combatants and pressure on the supply of adult fighters, which, in turn, generates demand for children. Similarly, the voluntary supply of children in the situations of intense fighting can intensify.[40]

In addition to this underlying logic of conflict intensity behind the *fighting capacity* explanation, I argue that non-state armed groups with high levels of military effectiveness relative to the government are more likely to participate in the battles for the most strategic targets, such as the capital or highly valued military installations elsewhere in the country. These strategic targets, however, involve conventional warfare, as opposed to guerrilla tactics. One of the differences between the two is that conventional warfare "finds expression mostly on the operational level, where the enemy is directly attacked in confrontations with the armed forces of the opposing state or in an offensive against its capital."[41] In guerilla fighting, rebels engage predominantly in "tactical strikes on railway bridges, power installations and the lives of politicians."[42] I argue that those armed groups which engage in *conventional warfare* –

[40] For further discussion and examples of child voluntarism in insecure environments refer to the section below called "Legitimacy and Insecure Environments." Also, different intensity of armed struggle might reflect different degrees of educational and employment structures' disruption, which was said to affect the decisions of some children to join armed groups.
[41] Duyvesteyn, *Clausewitz and African War*, p. 17.
[42] Ibid., p. 17.

defined as involving face to face open battles with an opponent for large military and state power targets – will require additional mobilization of fighters. There are two reasons for this proposition.

First, conventional warfare in the open battlefield, as opposed to guerrilla fighting in the bush or hidden terrain, generates the need for larger armies of foot soldiers in the ranks of the attacking side. According to Isabelle Duyvesteyn, the capital cannot be "taken by the use of small arms alone, nor could it be captured by a small number of fighters."[43] This is because the strategic military targets, such as the capital, are most likely to be rigorously defended by the opposing state army. Second, rigid defenses against open attacks are often implemented with the use of heavy weapons artillery, and as such, these battles will have higher number of military casualties than guerrilla attacks. It is very likely that adults are more reluctant to participate in such high-risk missions reminiscent of the pre-21st century historical battles. As a result, child combatants become very convenient for conventional warfare as "fearless" (relative to adults) and "disposable" bodies.[44]

Second, I propose that armed groups with higher ***material capacity*** are less likely to have children in their ranks. When demand for combatants, determined externally by certain characteristics of armed conflict (the variable of *fighting capacity* in my model), is high, the degree of the armed groups' leadership access to material resources and its ability to provide pecuniary incentives to new recruits should be negatively correlated with child soldier ratios. This is due to the pool of adults willing to join the military organization in exchange for cash. Moreover, armed groups might be interested in recruiting adults, rather than children, even if they have to pay, because adult fighters might be arguably more likely to win battles, or, the rebel leaders might be constrained by normative standards in the local communities against recruitment of minors.

The above logic of the material capacity argument, however, refers only to the military organizations which manage their finances from the top down. Thus, if an insurgency receives financial support from a diaspora, for example, then it might establish an institutional distribution of some of such resources down the chain of command to recruitment of fighters. When the access of an armed group to material resources occurs from the bottom up, as in the case of rebels' access to natural resources, then, I argue, the above logic does not hold. On the contrary, in the latter case low-ranking commanders of insurgencies have a vested interest in not sharing the rewards to which they have personal access and the opportunity to enrich themselves. Under such circumstances, rich armed groups will resort to underage recruitment, as children

[43] Ibid., p. 101.
[44] After reviewing psychological studies that examined fearlessness of children in peacetime contexts, Andvig and Gates concluded that young people may outperform adults in this characteristic (Andvig and Gates, "Recruiting Children for Armed Conflict," p. 17). Refer to the literature review in Chapter 2 for a further discussion of this point.

become more suitable candidates for enlistment or rather conscription, as commanders can avoid paying young recruits and can sustain forcible recruitment and retention of minors, unlike adults.

My third explanation of the child soldier practice suggests that armed groups that operate in conflicts with ***ethnic persecution*** are more likely to have children in their ranks. This supply-based proposition postulates that in the situations of extreme insecurity during the conflict, when civilians are not only becoming collateral casualties of ongoing battles but are also targeted in masses, such as in the case of persecution on ethnic grounds, crowds of children would seek protection within armed movements. While it is very difficult to imagine a conflict that is safe for a child, I nevertheless argue that conflicts with ethnic persecution can pose a graver threat to the lives of children and civilian adults than others. While many vulnerable groups in conflicts can be identified, it is ethnicity that often defines the victims of targeted violence and mass killings.[45] Sometimes the fear and the motives of self-defense are so strong, that children and adults alike join the perpetrators of ethnic killings, when potential protectors are too weak to provide defense or where they are stationed in inaccessible areas behind impenetrable rebel lines.

Besides adding to the supply of children for armed groups, the *ethnic persecution* factor might also affect the demand for children by conscientious groups which care about their image among civilians. Demand for combatants, or an abundant supply of children, does not necessarily lead to a decision by an armed group to recruit children. An insurgency might not be able to proceed to conscription or enlistment of minors if there is a cost associated with such a strategy. This cost can be manifested in the withdrawal of civilian backing from insurgents relying on local populations for financial support, logistics, and recruits. Such groups would be unable to recruit children without tarnishing their popular credentials unless some extreme circumstances, such as ethnic persecution in a country, legitimize child recruitment for defense purposes.

In the fourth proposition of my argument, I postulate that armed groups with larger ***territorial access*** are more likely to recruit children. Once an insurgency arrives at a decision to recruit children, it might have to deal with the problem of low supply of underage recruits. Whether the areas are depopulated due to migration and resettlement of the population, or unwilling children hide and try to avoid recruitment, rebels might not see any children around for enlistment or conscription. If the rebels control a substantial portion of a territory, I argue, they would have a larger chance to encounter people in the first place, and might thus have an unfettered access to children. Likewise, access to territories in neighboring countries which host war refugees might also offer belligerents an advantage of convenient "fishing grounds" with massive numbers of people clustered together in unprotected camps on a small geographical space. Thus,

[45] Because literature on violence against civilians has just started to emerge recently, it is not possible to generalize yet which groups of population are most victimized in armed conflicts. However, more often than not, it is ethnicity, rather than any other identity distinction among civilian groups of population, that becomes the primary target of deliberate selective violence.

armed groups are known to infiltrate camps and "enlist or seize inhabitants (including children) through the use of coercion or propaganda – a phenomenon referred to as "refugee manipulation and militarization."[46]

It is also possible that armed groups with larger territories might have higher mobility and ability to be stationed further away from their primary constituency or supportive civilian settlements. This, in turn, means that such armed groups might have more freedom in violating certain norms of domestic population by recruiting children while being away from the eyes of their supporters and thus avoiding reputation losses.

Having established the above four explanatory factors of my argument, I further propose that insurgents differ in their child recruitment decision making process depending on how *popular* they are among their base constituencies. I define *popularity* of a military organization as its ability to draw participatory support from a particular segment of the society on the basis of some ideological ground. The literature on mobilization of people for armed conflict suggests a number of potential ideological motivations driving recruits to participation in armed violence. According to Russell Hardin's book "One for All," the following ideological grounds, among others, stimulate mobilization of people for violence: ethnic hatred, nationalism, self-defense, self-determination, and territorial considerations. One might also add communist ideologies and religious or cultural divisions leading to specific group self-identification resulting in allegiance to its goals.

All these motives can serve as potential ideological means for insurgents to utilize in order to attract people into their ranks. Rebel efforts and strategies to do so, however, vary across different contexts, resulting in different degrees of popularity exhibited by various insurgencies. For instance, the TPLF movement of Ethiopia (1976-91) is regarded as a popular insurgency: "The persistent call of the young educated class — basically students and teachers — for radical change, with the self-determination of Tigray as a rallying slogan, inflamed popular aspirations."[47] In contrast, "while a small number of civilians volunteered for the LRA" of Northern Uganda in the early days of the group's existence, it is agreed that "in general there was little support for Kony's movement."[48]

By distinguishing between popular and unpopular groups in my argument, I further suggest that my proposed explanations of child recruitment bear different relevance to each of these categories. In particular, I propose that *popular armed groups* are more likely to recruit children if their *fighting*

[46] Stephen John Stedman and Fred Tanner, "Refugees as Resources in War," in Stedman and Tanner, *Refugee Manipulation*, p. 4.
[47] Aregawi Berhe, "The Origins of The Tigray People's Liberation Front," *African Affairs* (2004), 103/413, 569–592, p. 583.
[48] Blattman, "The Causes of Child Soldiering," p. 4. Balttman cited Gersony (1997) or Behrend (1999). "Other authors argue that Kony initially received broader support (e.g. Finnström, 2003; Doom and Vlassenroot, 1999). There is more agreement that by 1990 popular support for Kony had in essence ended" (Ibid., p. 4).

capacity is high and if they operate in conflicts where military actors engage in *ethnic persecution*. Meanwhile, *territorial access* and *material capacity* variables, as well as *fighting capacity*, better predict child soldier recruitment of *unpopular armed groups*. The logic of this extended argument is briefly summarized as follows.

Military organizations enjoying popular support from their countrymen are having inflows of committed adult fighters, and substitution of children for adults under such circumstances is counterproductive. Thus, *popular armed groups* might take children only if 1) the insurgency in question requires more combatants to achieve its military objective than the current inflow of adults provides (in case of the belligerents' high *fighting capacity*), or if 2) children themselves approach the rebels for defense in insecure environments (the situation of *ethnic persecution* in a conflict).

Unpopular armed groups attract fewer adult recruits on ideological grounds. This alone, however, does not necessarily suggest their high demand for additional fighters. First, if a group's *fighting capacity* is low, its goals will be relatively benign in accordance with its military capabilities, which will result in few or no large-scale battles and low demand for soldiers as a result. Second, in the absence of ideologically motivated adults willing to join the insurgency, the group leadership might offer *material rewards* to attract an additional pool of grown-ups. If the need for soldiers is still not met, the rebels might wish to recruit children. Unpopularity of the armed movement, however, will make these very children seek shelter and hide from undesirable conscription. Therefore, armed groups with more *territorial access*, I argue, will have a higher chance to locate and engage underage recruits forcibly.

Why Interesting?

Conflict Studies Literature

After the end of the Cold War, the conflict studies literature has contributed a number of works in which the authors suggested the distinction between the old and new wars.[49] Most versions of the distinction between old and new civil wars imply that new civil wars are criminal, depoliticized, private, and predatory while old civil wars are considered ideological, political, collective, and even noble.[50] The post–cold war manifestation of this type of argument can be traced in part to authors of popular literature who reported graphic accounts of recent civil wars in places such as Liberia, Bosnia, and Sierra Leone.[51]

[49] The most prominent and well-known work in this regard is the book by Mary Kaldor, *New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1999).
[50] Stathis N. Kalyvas, "'New' And 'Old' Civil Wars: A Valid Distinction?" *World Politics* (October 2001), 54 (1), pg. 99-118, p. 100.
[51] Ibid., p. 101. Kalyvas refers to the following works in the security studies literature and the international relations field, which propose such claim: Edward N. Lutwack, "Great-powerless Days," *Times Literary Supplement*, June 16, 1995; Kalevi J. Holsti, *The State, War, and the State of War*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Chris Hables Gray, *Post-Modern War: The New Politics of Conflicts* (London: Routledge, 1997); Mark Duffield, "Post-modern Conflict:Warlords, Post-adjustment States and Private Protection," *Civil Wars* 1, no. 1 (1998); David Keen,

In his 2001 article, Stathis Kalyvas contended that this distinction is not valid. He concluded his review of old and new wars by suggesting that "differences tend to be less pronounced than usually argued and that they may not array themselves neatly and dichotomously around the end of the cold war."[52]

Despite this debate in the conflict studies literature on the necessity of the old versus new civil war distinction, some prominent works on child soldiers take the position of clearly favoring the distinction. Thus, Peter Singer suggests that the nature of armed conflict has changed since 1990s, and that "a general norm held against child soldiers across last four millennia of warfare" has collapsed.[53] Unlike Singer, in my work I do not attribute new wars with the special feature of norm abrogation. Instead, in line with the debate in the conflict studies literature, I initially assume and subsequently validate by observation that compliance with the norm against child soldiers varies across different armed groups and thus is subject to certain conditions other than the historical timing of conflict. In other words, some militarized non-state actors attach more meaning to the norm than others during the same time period. Thus, my work sheds new light into this prominent debate about the new and old wars.

As to the normative aspect of insurgents' behavior in civil war, recent works in the conflict studies literature, and more specifically its branch on violence against civilians, have produced a number of interesting findings. A prominent study by Jeremy Weinstein, for example, offers a powerful distinction between armed groups based on material and ideational endowments.[54] The implication for normative behavior of insurgents was that the discipline was more likely to be violated and civilians abused if the perpetrators originated from the military organizations relying on material resources, as opposed to ideological rewards based on future promises. This distinction based on armed groups' endowments in the conflict studies literature does not apply to child soldier recruitment though, as I show with the empirical evidence in my dissertation. Child soldiers cannot be treated as a special case of violence against civilians. Instead, the issue corresponds more closely to theories of recruitment which explore the intricacies of demand and supply of combatants for armed groups. Those theories from the conflict studies literature will be utilized as a starting benchmark in this study.[55]

Another prominent theme in the literature on conflict studies, related to the concept of new wars, is the issue of weak and failed states. Recruitment of children in civil wars of strong states will likely prove counterproductive in the face of potent national armies with advanced military capabilities and heavy weapons. Indeed, the latter can defeat the armies of children at relative ease. For example, at one point in

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"The Economic Functions of Violence in Civil Wars," *Adelphi Paper* 320 (1998); Mats Berdal and David M. Malone, eds, *Greed and Grievance: Economic Agendas in Civil Wars* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2000).

[52] Stathis N. Kalyvas, "'New' And 'Old' Civil Wars," p. 117.

[53] Peter W. Singer, *Children at War* (New York: Pantheon, 2005), p. 15.

[54] Jeremy Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence* (Cambridge University Press, 2007).

[55] For a review of recruitment theories which were applied to the issue of child soldiering refer to this dissertation's Chapter 3 on the theoretical framework.

1992 when ECOMOG forces in Liberia resorted to air bombings of the NPFL positions near Barnesville and Harbel, the rebels' forces consisting of many child soldiers broke out into fear and chaos, as they tried to escape the horrifying effect and devastation power of aerial bombardment. However, most of today's civil wars, according to Ann Hironaka, occur in the weak but independent states created after 1945, which are incapable of defending themselves against rebel insurgency.[56] At times without foreign intervention in the conflict, child recruits in such civil wars can withstand the feeble resistance of poorly equipped and often ill-disciplined government soldiers, thus contributing to conflict onset, escalation, and duration.

Hence, in the weak states demand for child soldiers increases relative to ones with strong and functioning institutions, including a potent army. Nonetheless, even within a single weak state (Liberia) we can observe variance across the ratios of child soldiers among different armed groups. Similarly, not all weak and independent states exhibit the presence of child soldiers. But the states' weakness might affect my independent variable of *fighting capacity*, which is a major explanatory factor behind the groups' demand for child soldiers.

Child Soldier Studies Literature

Despite the gravity of the child soldier problem, there is a lack of systematic analysis in the literature on the issue that would illuminate why some armed groups recruit children whereas others do not. To my knowledge, there has been no published study that examined the variance of child recruitment across different insurgencies. By far the highest number of general reports that touch upon various aspects of the child soldier issue is produced by the NGO and IO community. Although varying in the depth of analysis, a large bulk of these studies are non-systematic, anecdotal, and reflects on a handful of interviews. Such *interview-based reports* were published by Amnesty International (AI), Human Rights Watch (HRW), Save the Children (SC), and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), among others.[57]

Studies on child soldiers that are based on a small number of interviews represent a valuable first stage of theory building. However, by their nature, they are not designed to reveal systematic patterns in the phenomenon. For example, the study by Rachel Brett and Irma Specht claims to reach conclusions about causes of child soldiering after interviewing 53 former child soldiers from ten different war

[56] Ann Hironaka, *Neverending Wars: The International Community, Weak States, and the Perpetuation of Civil War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005), p. 7.

[57] For examples of such reports please refer to Human Rights Watch (HRW), *Easy Prey: Child Soldiers in Liberia*, (USA: Human Rights Watch/Africa, Human Rights Watch Children's Right Project, 1994), http://www.hrw.org/legacy/reports/1994/liberia2/; UNICEF, *Adult Wars, Child Soldiers.*
For the academic literature theorizing on the basis of published interview accounts please see Afua Twum-Danso, *Africa's Young Soldiers: The Co-option of Childhood*, Monograph 82, Institute for Security Studies, April 2003, http://www.iss.co.za/Pubs/Monographs/No82/Content.html; Laura A. Barnitz, *Child Soldiers: Youth Who Participate in Armed Conflict* (Washington: Youth Advocate Program International, 1997); Goodwin-Gill and Cohn, *Child Soldiers*; Peter Singer, *Children at War*.

"situations" – that is between five and seven informants from each war "situation."[58] Such a sample size can hardly be considered representative of the entire child soldier population. Graça Machel's report claims to be based on 24 case studies of different conflicts. However, these case studies are never referenced in the report and there is no clear methodology offered by its author about how and even if informants were actually selected for the interviews.[59] Similarly, Guy Goodwin-Gill and Ilene Cohn base their conclusions about child participation in conflicts on an unknown number of interviews with unspecified subjects from El Salvador, Guatemala, Israeli-occupied territories, Liberia and Sri Lanka.[60]

Information obtained from a small number of respondents might describe the characteristics of a highly unrepresentative sample, especially if a study does not provide a clear description of the methodology used for designing questionnaires and selecting informants for the interviews. In addition, such studies typically do not interview the subjects from a control sample – one that would be composed of children who did not join armed groups during the conflicts in question. This is a very serious limitation from the methodological point of view.[61] Information from the control sample is critical as it provides an essential benchmark for comparison of former child soldiers with non-participants in order to identify any potential statistically significant difference in the characteristics of these two groups.

Within the academic community, there have been a few systematic studies of the child soldier phenomenon. Only some of them, however, conducted a cross-sectional analysis that would attempt to examine the problem comparatively across conflicts or conflict regions. In general, *cross-country macro studies* of child soldier recruitment are very rare. One of my previous coauthored works on the subject examined child recruitment in 19 African intrastate conflicts during 1975-2002.[62] Another coauthored work of mine analyzed local patterns of recruitment in 690 sub-national regions in 52 African countries in the period 1990–2004.[63] In line with many other cross-country studies in social science, however, research utilizing macro data might be subject to the ecological fallacy in making conclusions about individual behavior on the basis of country level variables.

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[58] Rachel Brett and Irma Specht, Y*oung Soldiers: Why They Choose to Fight* (ILO: Lynne Reiner Publishers, 2004). The war "situations" mentioned in their study are armed struggles in Afghanistan, Colombia, Congo, the DRC, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sri Lanka, and United Kingdom (with different interviews with underage participants in paramilitaries of Northern Island and British Army).

[59] Graça Machel, *Impact of Armed Conflict on Children*, UN Report, August 26 1996, http://www.unicef.org/graca/.

[60] Goodwin-Gill and Cohn, *Child Soldiers*. From the context of the book one understands that Ilene Cohn interviewed humanitarian workers, politicians, as well as former child soldiers, but it is not clear what the proportions or numbers of those were in any given conflict case.

[61] See, for example, Barry Ames, "Methodological Problems in the Study of Child Soldiers," Paper presented at the Annual Convention of the American Political Science Association, Philadelphia, PA, September 2006, pp. 6-7.

[62] Achvarina and Reich, "No Place to Hide."

[63] Vera Achvarina, Ragnhild Nordås, Gudrun Østby, and Siri C. Aas Rustad, "Regional Poverty and Child Soldier Recruitment: A Disaggregated Study of Sub-National African Regions, 1990–2004," forthcoming, *Politische Vierteljahresschrift (PVS) (Political Science Quarterly),* Special Issue "Identity, Institutions and Economy: Causes of internal political violence," 2009.

Single-country, *micro-level*, *survey-based studies* of former child and adult combatants have started to appear recently, albeit sporadically. These are performed by scholars interested in the micro-foundations of recruitment. Surveys of relatively large samples of individuals have been conducted on youth from Colombia, Congo, Liberia, Nepal, Sierra Leone and Uganda.[64] Survey research offers invaluable insights into the decisions of individuals and armed groups' personnel as opposed to groups and children in general. Findings from such studies help build testable theoretical propositions and provide support for certain assumptions employed in work with macro data. Invaluable as they are, most of these survey studies, unfortunately, do not include a control sample.[65] Moreover, while uncovering individual decisions in one particular country, conflict, or an armed group, these studies are also non-generalizable unless their implications based on intricate analysis, are subjected to systematic testing across armed groups. In addition, micro studies of this kind are often constrained by their own virtue of having the most restrictive experimental design, that is of one armed group examined or one type of recruitment (forced or voluntary) considered.

Academic authors of *theoretical papers* have attempted to apply various existing approaches from other disciplines, such as principal-agent modeling, to organize stylized facts of child soldier recruitment into theoretical frameworks.[66] Several alternative models have been suggested for the decision-making process of military organizations, distinguishing between voluntary and forced recruitment situations, and

[64] Three widely known surveys, which were specifically addressing the issue of child recruitment, are the one on Uganda by Annan, Blattman and Horton, *The State of Youth and Youth Protection in Northern Uganda*; the one on Liberia by James Pugel, "Disaggregating the Causal Factors Unique to Child Soldiering," Working Paper, presented at the Child Soldiers Initiative Working Group Session in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 15-16 September 2006; and the one on Colombia by Francisco Gutiérrez Sanín, "Organizing Minors," Working Paper, presented at the Child Soldiers Initiative Working Group Session in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 15-16 September 2006.

[65] Thus, out of three country studies of child recruitment specifically, only one included into the analysis a control sample of non-abducted children: Ugandan study by Annan, Blattman and Horton, *The State of Youth and Youth Protection in Northern Uganda*. The other two studies on Colombia and Liberia did not compare their findings with any group of non-participants in armed struggle: Colombian survey by Gutiérrez Sanín, "Organizing Minors" and a study on Liberia by James Pugel, "Disaggregating The Causal Factors Unique To Child Soldiering." Psychosocial studies of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) assessment in former child soldiers have a mixed record of inclusion of a control sample in their analysis. The following surveys did not include a control sample: Christophe Pierre Bayer, Fionna Klasen, Hubertus Adam, "Association of Trauma and PTSD Symptoms with Openness to Reconciliation and Feelings of Revenge among Former Ugandan and Congolese Child Soldiers," *The Journal of American Medical Association (JAMA),* 298(5), 2007, pp. 555-559; Theresa Betancourt, Marie de la Soudière, *Psychosocial Adjustment and Social Reintegration of Former Child Combatants in Sierra Leone: a Longitudinal Study, Report of baseline data assessment*, Sierra Leone: International Rescue Committee, 2003. Yet, others did compare their results with a control group: Theresa Betancourt, Shawna Pochan, Marie de la Soudière, *Psychosocial Adjustment and Social Reintegration of Child Ex-Soldiers in Sierra Leone - Follow-Up Analysis* (Sierra Leone: International Rescue Committee, 2005); Brandon Kohrt, Mark Jordans, Wietse Tol, et. al., "Comparison of Mental Health between Former Child Soldiers and Children Never Conscripted by Armed Groups in Nepal," *The Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)*, 300 (6), 2008, pp. 691-702.

[66] The first model of child soldier recruitment based on the principal-agent approach and reviewed in the subsequent section of this dissertation has been offered in the work of Scott Gates, "Recruiting Child Soldiers," Paper presented at the CSCW Workshop on Techniques of Violence in Civil War, PRIO, August 20-21, 2004, Oslo.

demand and supply of child and adult recruits.[67] Without empirical testing, however, the factors offered in such studies remain conjectures and cannot claim to represent the actual causes of child soldiering.

Despite the methodological limitations of the existing child soldier literature, many of these studies have proposed a number of explanations behind the recruitment of minors. Such factors behind child vulnerability as poverty, orphans, lack of education and employment, spread of small arms and displacement of people were suggested by various authors to explain the underage recruitment from the point of view of child vulnerability to enlistment and coercion.[68] These factors are recycled in the literature repeatedly. Some of them have been subjected to certain forms of empirical verification. Nevertheless, as I show in the literature review section, the evidence used to assess many of such factors that are claimed to affect child enlistment with armed groups is highly anecdotal and mixed regarding the effects. In addition, there is currently no work that would review all of these factors in a unified testing framework in order to explore which of them might play more important role than others.

The existing explanations of the child soldier phenomenon from the perspective of armed groups, focusing on the latter's needs to engage in recruitment of minors, have received even less attention in the literature. Such marginal factors include conflict duration, intensity and timing; an armed group's material endowments, fighting capacity, and presence of central control by the leadership of the organization; as well as certain characteristics of children that make them a valuable military asset for recruiters. Most of these factors have been mentioned occasionally by non-systematic or non-empirical studies as speculative potential explanations.

In my work I offer a so far missing test of most of these proposed factors which I treat as independent or control variables in my explanatory framework. In my analysis, however, most of the existing explanations are proposed to have a different causal logic in their effect on child soldier recruitment.[69]

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[67] For alternative models see the following works which are reviewed in my dissertation in Chapter 3 on the explanatory framework: 1) Andvig and Gates, "Recruiting Children for Armed Conflict"; 2) Bernd Beber and Christopher Blattman, "The Industrial Organization of Rebellion: The Logic of Forced Labor and Child Soldiering," Working Paper, October 2008.

[68] For the full list of citations please refer to Chapter 2 on literature review. Poverty, for example, was mentioned in Goodwin-Gill and Cohn, *Child Soldiers*, pp. 23, 31, and 38; Twum-Danso, *Africa's Young Soldiers*, pp. 8, 10; Barnitz, *Child Soldiers,* p. 23; Machel, *Impact of Armed Conflict on Children*, p. 11; and CSUCS, "Child Soldier Use 2003," p. 2. Orphaning was cited as a factor behind child enlistment by the following authors and reports among others: Brett and McCallin, *Children*; HRW, *Easy Prey*, pp. 15-19, and UNICEF, *Adult Wars, Child Soldiers,* p. 19. The link between education and unemployment among youth is stressed in Henrik Urdal, "The Devil in the Demographics: The Effect of Youth Bulges on Domestic Armed Conflict, 1950-2000," Paper No. 14, Social Development Papers (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2004). Small arms argument is prominent in such works as Singer, *Children at War*, pp. 38, 55; UNICEF, "No Guns, Please: We Are Children," UNICEF Booklet, 2001; McManimon, "Use of Children as Soldiers."

[69] The factor of groups fighting capabilities is one of such potential explanations that I propose to have a positive effect on child soldier recruitment, whereas other scholars believe it has a negative relationship with the latter as numerous battles should be negatively correlated with the presence of children among insurgents (Andvig and Gates, "Recruiting Children for Armed Conflict," p. 16).

Moreover, my explanatory framework is primarily based on factors that I newly identify – such as *ethnic persecution* in the armed conflict, an armed group's *fighting capacity* to challenge an opponent, as well as insurgents' *territorial control* ability at home and abroad. The existing literature on child soldiers has not mentioned these factors as potential explanations of the phenomenon. In addition, my work adds a unique perspective by identifying and empirically testing the conditions which determine the different explanatory power of each proposed factor.

By theorizing about diverse military organizations, I utilize both a deductive logic and comparative research design which allow me to identify and test my newly proposed explanations. My explanatory framework builds, to some extent, on the existing theoretical approaches, but it departs from them significantly as I offer an original design for empirical analysis. By utilizing statistical techniques and case study analysis on the macro and micro data which I compiled from secondary sources and collected during my fieldwork in Africa, I empirically test my arguments and assess some speculative implications from the existing literature on child recruitment.

The need for performing empirical work across different conflicts has been advocated by prominent scholars in the field. Thus, Chris Blattman after presenting his own results from the survey-based analysis of youth abductions by the Lord Resistance Army (LRA) in Northern Uganda, promotes the following discussion: "Based on data from a single case, these policy implications are best regarded as unproven but testable implications of a general theory of recruitment, to be examined in other contexts. The literature on children in armed conflict, while rich in qualitative case studies, is short on hypothesis-testing. Future qualitative and quantitative research would do best to focus on evidence that allows us to discriminate between competing hypotheses, or fills the psychological gap in our understanding of indoctrination and disorientation of children."[70] My work bears on this suggestion, thereby providing a valuable contribution to the research on the child recruitment phenomenon.

Why Important?

The child soldier issue is regarded by some international organizations as a variant of the child labor problem.[71] The undesirability of merging these two distinct problems becomes apparent when we take into account the conclusions of researchers opposing the campaign against child labor who show that in some contexts children deprived of work may end up in worse circumstances than adult-like toiling. Meanwhile, it is hard to find a proponent of underage recruitment who would argue that soldiering can be a remedy for children against some other, possibly worse, situation. Child soldiering can perhaps be

[70] Blattman, "Causes of Child Soldiering," p. 26.

[71] For example, the following report of Amnesty International advocated in 1999 for an inclusion of the child soldier issue in the International Labor Organization Convention (Amnesty International, *Child Soldiers: One of the Worst Abuses of Child Labour* (Amnesti International Report, January 1999, *IOR 42/01/99*). On the official website of the ILO the issue of children in armed conflict is treated under the category of child labor: http://www.ilo.org/ipec/areas/Armedconflict/lang–en/index.htm.

viewed in analogy with land mines, which are very easy to plant, but may be extremely difficult and expensive to dismantle.[72] It may be virtually effortless to recruit minors, but it is typically hard to rehabilitate them at a later stage because child soldiering inflicts heavy psychosocial damage on this young segment of the country's population.[73]

Below, I review some of the consequences of child soldiering which are problematic to reverse – such as mental and physical health trauma, drug and substance abuse – as well as social and economic reintegration problems. Whereas efforts can be made, as I show, to mitigate some of the harmful outcomes of child soldiering, it is a much more challenging enterprise than designing preventative measures to curtail the practice of underage recruitment. When left unaddressed, however, the humanitarian consequences of child soldiering become the links in a chain leading from prior recruitment of minors to intergenerational violence and repeated armed struggles within certain societies, as I discuss further in this section. The consequences of child soldering for the post-war society development are further exacerbated by the repercussions of child recruitment that affect dynamics of the conflict itself and the associated intensity of destruction. These geostrategic consequences of child soldiering are also discussed below.

Humanitarian Consequences

Exposure to Violence. As some of the examples used in this chapter demonstrate, in today's intrastate conflicts children simultaneously become victims and agents of brutality. The process of child recruitment in itself, especially when forced, is frequently accompanied by violent and aggressive treatment of recruits, such as beating or torture.[74] Often, children are conscripted in the immediate aftermath of violence performed against their family members for ethnic, economic, grievance or other reasons. Upon their capture or enlistment, children themselves are habitually coerced by recruiters to kill or commit

[72] It costs $3 to plant a landmine and between $300 and $1,000 to dismantle it (Thomas Weiss and Cindy Collins, *Humanitarian Challenges and Intervention: World Politics and the Dilemmas of Help* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2000), p. 112).

[73] The term "psychosocial" in the psychological literature refers to the "dynamic relationship between psychological and social effects, each continually influencing the other. "Psychological effects" are those that affect emotion, behavior, thoughts, memory, learning ability, perceptions and understanding. "Social effects" refer to altered relationships due to death, separation, estrangement and other losses, family and community breakdown, damage to social values and customary practices, and the destruction of social facilities and services. Social effects also extend to the economic sphere as many individuals and families become destitute through the material and economic devastation of armed conflict" (Theresa Betancourt, Ivelina Borisova, Julia Rubin-Smith, Tara Gingerich, Timothy Williams, Jessica Agnew-Blais, *Psychosocial Adjustment and Social Reintegration of Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups: The State of The Field and Future Directions* (Cambridge, MA: Psychology Beyond Borders and François-Xavier Bagnoud Center for Health and Human Rights/Harvard School of Public Health, May 1, 2008), p. 14.

[74] Although there is not enough evidence to believe that recruitment of children is predominantly forced, this type of recruitment practice is indeed known to occur in many if not most conflicts.

atrocities against relatives, neighbors, or friends.[75] For instance, former youth abductees in Northern Uganda reported being forced to beat, cut, or kill their friends or family members.[76]

During their stay with armed groups, child soldiers are recipients of, perpetrators of and witnesses of even more violent behavior – beatings, sexual abuse, killings and mass murders, rape, abuse of dead bodies, and torture. For example, Ugandan young male abductees witnessed and were subject to most of these atrocities during their stay with the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), unlike children who were not conscripted.[77] A total of 54.4% of 169 surveyed child soldiers from Uganda and DRC "reported having killed someone and 27.8% reported that they were forced to engage in sexual contact."[78] Similarly, in Nepal, former child soldiers were found to suffer a higher exposure to bombings, torture and brutal death scenes, as opposed to their non-conscripted peers.[79] These are just some of the most common experiences that child soldiers go through and that were captured with the pre-formulated questions of researchers.[80] Yet, we are unaware of the extent of other atrocities to which child soldiers may have been exposed.[81]

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[75] Such recruitment practice is designed to minimize if not eliminate the chances of new recruits to return home to their communities. It also introduces newly conscripted young soldiers to the violent practices routinely employed by rebels against civilians in many conflicts today. It is not only the underage recruits who are subject to this recruitment strategy involving harming civilians. As one Liberian survey of adult ex-combatants demonstrated, 7.8% of all male informants were made to kill family or friends upon forced recruitment (Kirsten Johnson, Jana Asher, Stephanie Rosborough, et. al., "Association of Combatant Status and Sexual Violence With Health and Mental Health Outcomes in Postconflict Liberia," *The Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)*, 300(6), 2008, pp. 676-690, at p. 682).

[76] Blattman, Annan and Horton, *The State of Youth and Youth Protection in Northern Uganda,* p. 52.

[77] On difference in exposure to atrocities between abducted and non-abducted youth, as well as for the full list of traumatic experiences in the Ugandan context refer to, for example, Blattman, Annan and Horton, *The State of Youth and Youth Protection in Northern Uganda,* Table 9 on p. 52.

[78] Christophe Pierre Bayer, Fionna Klasen, Hubertus Adam, "Association of Trauma and PTSD Symptoms with Openness to Reconciliation and Feelings of Revenge among Former Ugandan and Congolese Child Soldiers," *The Journal of American Medical Association (JAMA),* 298(5), 2007, pp. 555-559, at p. 555.

[79] Kohrt, Jordans, Tol, et. al., "Comparison of Mental Health between Former Child Soldiers and Children Never Conscripted by Armed Groups in Nepal," pp. 695-696.

[80] For additional examples of child soldier exposure to extreme violence see also Michael Wessells, *Child Soldiers: from Violence to Protection* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006); UNICEF, *Adult Wars, Child Soldiers*; Herrendra De Silva, "Conscription of Children in Armed Conflict: Clarifications," *British Medical Journal* (323), 2001.

[81] Thus, eyewitnesses of genocidal wars recall other examples of "gruesome and nightmarish" atrocities: "a pitchfork stuck in the gut, the private parts of women excised, limbs severed, teeth removed one by one, amputations of tongues and noses, Achilles tendons sliced by machetes so that victims cannot run away, and the lingering stench of piles of dead bodies" (Book Review by Tony Miksanek of James E. Waller, *Becoming Evil: How Ordinary People Commit Genocide And Mass Killing* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007), in *The Journal of the American Medical Association* (JAMA), 300(6), August 13, 2008, p. 737). This list comes from records of the Holocaust, Cambodia, East Timor, Kosovo and Rwanda genocide survivors and observers. For examples of horrific atrocities committed during the Liberia's civil war see the book by Stephen Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy: The Destruction of Liberia and the Religious Dimension of an African Civil War* (London, UK: Hurst & Company Publisher, 1999).

Trauma. The degree to which witnessing and experiencing brutality has an effect on children's mental health has recently received attention in the fields of psychology and psychiatry.[82] Yet, the issue still remains relatively unexplored. Outside of the context of armed conflict, studies in psychology established "links between childhood experience of violence and violent and other anti-social behavior in childhood and later life," although a small part of psychological literature also emphasizes the "resiliency of youth to extreme stressors."[83] Within the context of armed struggle, short-term and long-term effects of a child's exposure to violence have been identified in a number of the interview-based and ethnographic studies in Angola, Mozambique, DRC, and Sierra Leone, as well as by survey-based research conducted on children in Northern Uganda, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Nepal among others.[84]

Quantitative studies conducted shortly after the reintegration of ex-combatants, while "using various measures of psychosocial wellbeing and mental health" all identified psychosocial problems in former child soldiers.[85] Allen and Schomerus found high levels of psychological trauma and social dislocation among former child abductees from Northern Uganda, while Derluyn et. al. identified extremely high rates of posttraumatic stress reactions among their informants from the same conflict region.[86] The presence of symptom criteria for PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) was also detected among a mixed

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[82] The following discussion is based on the literature review of recent studies on mental health of war-affected children offered in Betancourt, et. al., *Psychosocial Adjustment and Social Reintegration of Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups*. For review of the studies published prior to 2007 see also Christopher Blattman and Jeannie Annan, "The Consequences of Child Soldiering," HiCN Working Paper 22, 2007.

[83] On the link between childhood experience of violence and anti-social behavior see United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), *Implementation Handbook for the Convention on the Rights of the Child* (New York: UNICEF, 2002), p. 258. On resilience of children to extreme stressors refer to Ann Masten, "Ordinary Magic: Resilience Processes in Development," *American Psychologist, 56*(3), 2005, 227-238, cited in Blattman and Annan, "The Consequences of Child Soldiering," p. 7.

[84] For such studies conducted by researchers from outside of psychology or psychiatry fields see: Guy Goodwin-Gill and Ilene Cohn, *Child Soldiers: The Role of Children in Armed Conflict* (New York: Clarendon Press, 1994)*;* Alcinda Honwana, *Child Soldiers in Africa: The Ethnography of Political Violence* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006); Susan Shepler, "The Rites of the Child: Global Discourses of Youth and Reintegrating Child Soldiers in Sierra Leone," *Journal of Human Rights*, *4*(2), 2005, pp.197-211; Zack-Williams, "Child Soldiers in Sierra Leone and the Problems of Demobilization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration into Society: Some Lessons for Social Workers in War-Torn Societies," *Social Work Education*, *25*(2), 2006, pp.119-128; Krijn Peters and Paul Richards, "Why We Fight: Voices of Youth Combatants in Sierra Leone," *Africa*, *68*(2), 1998, pp. 83-215.

[85] Betancourt, et. al., *Psychosocial Adjustment and Social Reintegration of Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups,* p. 14.

[86] Tim Allen and Mareike Schomerus, "A Hard Homecoming: Lessons Learned From the Reception Center Process in Northern Uganda," (Washington, DC: Management Systems International, 2006); Ilse Derluyn, Eric Broekaert, Gilberte Schuyten, Els De Temmerman, "Post-Traumatic Stress in Former Ugandan Child Soldiers," *Lancet* (363), 2004, 861-863. The study of Allen and Schomerus "collected data on a large (N=886), although nonrepresentative, sample of combatants under 18 in Uganda. The report surveyed youth who had recently reintegrated into their communities after an often-brief stay at an interim rehabilitation center." "The authors did not use standardized measures of mental health" (Betancourt, et. al., *Psychosocial Adjustment and Social Reintegration of Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups,* p. 14). The study of Derluyn et al. "evaluated 71 former child soldiers, using the Impact of Event Scale-Revised." "This study has been critiqued due to its recruitment methods" (Betancourt, et. al., *Psychosocial Adjustment and Social Reintegration of Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups,* p. 14).

sample of Ugandan and DRC former child soldiers.[87] Findings of other studies suggested that effects of war violence on children might persist over time. Emotional problems such as "vivid memories and dreams of war related violence," insomnia and nightmares, were all recorded in former child soldiers from El Salvador ten years after the end of the conflict.[88] The studies that attempted to measure systematically the long-term psychosocial impact of child soldiering and processes of mental health adjustment among war underage participants over time came to similar conclusions.[89] This longitudinal research established the inability of former child soldiers to "escape their violent pasts" years after conflicts terminated, with symptoms of depression, anxiety, hostility, low levels of confidence, and anti-social behaviors remaining.[90] Moreover, one study also identified deterioration over time in mental health of those informants who were exposed to "intimate victimization and perpetration."[91]

These and numerous other studies have thus concluded that former child soldiers exhibit enduring patterns of distress. However, very few have analyzed whether children who did not end up with armed groups enjoyed better mental health after the war than former child soldiers. Rare quantitative studies that

[87] Bayer et. al., "Association of Trauma and PTSD Symptoms with Openness to Reconciliation and Feelings of Revenge among Former Ugandan and Congolese Child Soldiers." This work by Bayer et. al. "studied 169 former child soldiers in rehabilitation centers in Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo and found that about one-third (34.9%) of the children interviewed met clinical symptom criteria for PTSD" (Betancourt, et. al., *Psychosocial Adjustment and Social Reintegration of Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups,* p. 14).

[88] Maria Santacruz and Rubi Arana, "Experiences and Psychosocial Impact of the El Salvador Civil War on Child Soldiers," *Biomedica* (22), 2002, Supplement 2, 283-397. Although this study "lacks data on mental health problems at the time of reintegration, it provides a valuable perspective on the enduring difficulties former child soldiers face. The authors interviewed 293 former child soldiers who had belonged to one of El Salvador's two armed groups (FMLN and the FAES) and explored the frequency with which the interviewees experienced mental and emotional problems resulting from their participation in the armed conflict. Although not all the interviewees showed signs of emotional problems, almost three out of five continued to have vivid memories and dreams of war related violence, 20% suffered from constant insomnia and 16% had nightmares. In addition, 39% said that they felt tired and depressed quite often; a similar number of interviewees felt nervous" (Betancourt, et. al., *Psychosocial Adjustment and Social Reintegration of Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups,* p. 15).

[89] A longitudinal study by Boothby followed 39 male former combatants from Mozambique over a period from 1988 to 2003 (Neil Boothby, "What happens when child soldiers grow up? The Mozambique case study," *Intervention* 2006, Vol. 4, No. 3, pp. 244-259).

[90] The study of Boothby on Mozambican child soldiers found that "recurrent thoughts and memories of traumatic events" which boys experienced immediately after the war in 1988 all continued 16 years later (Neil Boothby, "What Happens When Child Soldiers Grow Up? The Mozambique Case Study," *Intervention* 2006, Vol. 4, No. 3, pp. 244-259, p. 245). Overall, this study followed 39 male former combatants from Mozambique over a period from 1988 to 2003. Another longitudinal research was performed in Sierra Leone and found that the symptoms of depression, anxiety and hostility, as well as the levels of confidence and pro-social (positive) behaviors, were all present in former child soldiers upon conflict termination and remained at the same levels three years later (Betancourt, de la Soudière, *Psychosocial Adjustment and Social Reintegration of Former Child Combatants in Sierra Leone*). The researchers in Sierra Leone first interviewed 266 former child soldiers (male and female) at re-entry into their communities. Three years later, the project leaders re-interviewed 133 youth from the original sample. This study was using "a locally validated measure of psychosocial adjustment developed by the Oxford Center for Refugee Studies" (Betancourt, et. al., *Psychosocial Adjustment and Social Reintegration of Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups,* p. 15).

[91] Betancourt, et. al., *Psychosocial Adjustment and Social Reintegration of Former Child Combatants in Sierra Leone.* Thus, researchers observed increased levels of depression and anxiety.

meanwhile offered a comparison with a control group provide mixed evidence, indicating in some cases no difference, whereas in other cases substantial difference between former child soldiers and other war-affected youth in terms of mental health. A research project comparing Sierra Leonean child soldiers from the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) with non-conscripted children, for example, uncovered similar rates of psychosocial problems, including depression, anxiety and hostility, among both groups. It also "found no significant differences between former child soldiers and the comparison group in terms of positive psychosocial adjustment outcomes, such as confidence and prosocial behaviors."[92] In their study of Ugandan abductees, Annan and Blattman found that aggression among former abductees was low compared to a control sample of non-abducted children, while social integration was strong.[93] Even though this study claims no support for "the prevailing view that participation in war leads to broad-based 'traumatization'," their analysis nevertheless revealed some, albeit minor, psychological impact of abduction with mild distress and depression signs in the subjects. [94] Yet another project on children in Nepal, based on the survey of both former child soldiers and children that were not conscripted, "found that child soldiers had worse mental health outcomes (symptoms of depression, PTSD, general psychological difficulties, and function impairment) than the comparison groups, with the exception of anxiety symptoms."[95]

There appears to be no well-established agreement on the extent of the differences in the psychological effects on former child soldiers compared to non-conscripted youth. It has been documented though that "the concentration of traumatic stress is likely driven by the concentration of extreme violence experienced."[96] Moreover, it is a specific type of violence – namely sexual abuse – that

[92] Theresa Betancourt, Shawna Pochan, Marie de la Soudière, *Psychosocial Adjustment and Social Reintegration of Child Ex-Soldiers in Sierra Leone - Follow-Up Analysis* (Sierra Leone: International Rescue Committee, 2005). In this study, the "baseline interviews with former child soldiers were compared to assessments of 135 community youth who were not associated with the RUF" (Betancourt et. al., *Psychosocial Adjustment and Social Reintegration of Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups*, p. 16).

[93] Blattman and Annan, "The Consequences of Child Soldiering," pp. 7, 15. "This is a representative survey of 741 youth (14-30 years of age), 462 of whom were once with the Lord's Resistance Army. Like the majority of studies with former child soldiers, the youth provided data on their war experiences (i.e., self reported and retrospective) as well as their current wellbeing. Measures of violence, social support, hostility and distress were adapted from the Harvard Trauma Questionnaire, and the Northern Uganda Child and Youth Psychosocial Adjustment Scale" (Betancourt, et. al., *Psychosocial Adjustment and Social Reintegration of Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups,* p. 16). The above findings, according to Annan and Blattman, contradict the previous generation literature that claimed evidence for traumatization of former child soldiers, particularly in the Ugandan conflict.

[94] Blattman and Annan, "The Consequences of Child Soldiering," pp. 1, 16.

[95] Kohrt et. al., "Comparison of Mental Health between Former Child Soldiers and Children Never Conscripted by Armed Groups in Nepal," pp. 696, 700. "In Nepal, Kohrt surveyed 140 returned children and 142 children never associated with armed groups" (Betancourt, et. al., *Psychosocial Adjustment and Social Reintegration of Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups,* p. 16).

[96] Blattman and Annan, "The Consequences of Child Soldiering," p. 17. Kohrt et. al. also arrived at the same conclusion: "The difference in mental health outcomes between child soldiers and never-conscripted children can be explained in part by greater exposure to traumatic events among child soldiers…" (Kohrt et. al., "Comparison of

is most likely connected with the highest levels of mental disorder among both combatants and civilians alike.[97] With exposure to violence identified as a predictor of impaired mental health, it is possible that non-conscripted youth from conflict environments have been exposed to violence of a comparable degree to child soldiers.[98]

Attrition rates. Those former child soldiers who shared their gruesome stories survived the war. Meanwhile, an unknown number of child soldiers perished during conflicts, never having a chance to narrate their stories. Unlike adults, children are the ones being sent into combat first, often untrained, and sometimes simply used as "cannon fodder."[99] In my own survey of former Liberian child soldiers 45% of informants responded that children were more likely to die in their units than adults.[100] One third of former adult combatants stated that children were better fighters because they "fight with ignorance," they are "more risky," "do not know what they are doing," and "run forward" in battles. "Fearlessness" was the most cited reason offered by children themselves behind their own widespread belief (42% of my informants) that they were better fighters than adults.[101]

Mental Health Between Former Child Soldiers and Children Never Conscripted by Armed Groups in Nepal," p. 700). These results are also said to be "reinforced by a broad literature on refugee war trauma using similar measures," cited in Annan and Blattman's work on p. 17.

[97] Betancourt and de la Soudière, *Psychosocial Adjustment and Social Reintegration of Former Child Combatants in Sierra Leone*. Kohrt et. al.'s study also speculated about the potentially larger effect of sexual abuse trauma on mental health, as opposed to other trauma types. However, without having data on sexual abuse, that study did not aim at proving such conjecture statistically.

[98] For this reason, the results from two of such studies on Uganda and Sierra Leone should be treated with caution. Both cases, I would argue, represent extreme outliers in terms of how violence manifested itself during the conflict. Consider that in the crucial Ugandan case the violence experienced by abducted children was short lived and of lower level, compared to other armed conflicts. For example, the average length of stay of Ugandan abductees with the LRA was nine months. This is about five times shorter than the average stay of four years in my own survey of Liberian ex-combatants. Similarly, the exposure to lower levels of violence by Ugandan abducted youth is revealed in the study that compared them with the DRC child soldiers. The latter were found to have higher participation in battles and combat, and were reported to have "killed someone personally" more often as a result of it (Bayer et. al., "Association of Trauma and PTSD Symptoms with Openness to Reconciliation and Feelings of Revenge among Former Ugandan and Congolese Child Soldiers," p. 558).

In the Sierra Leonean conflict, on the contrary, violence manifested itself as the most extreme unparalleled one committed in recent history. Not only the atrocities recorded were horrendous and heinous, they were also widely spread across the country and affected different societal groups on a mass scale. Therefore, similar levels of distress in former child soldiers and non-conscripted youth claimed by the two otherwise methodologically superior studies in question could be attributed to shorter and lower level of violence exposure by children within the LRA in Uganda, on the one hand, and an extremely high degree of atrocities experienced by most of the population in Sierra Leone during the conflict, on the other hand.

[99] For a discussion on how children were made to perform this role see HRW, *Easy Prey*, pp. 32–34. Similarly, Indian sources reported that the smallest boys from armed groups operating in the north-east of the country "were placed closest to the enemy" "as the most fearless" ("Child Soldiers in Northeast Raise Concerns," *New Delhi TV*, May 5, 2007, www.ndtv.com, cited in CSUCS, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008*, p. 171).

[100] Eighteen percent of my informants reported the reverse trend – that of adults being more likely to die, whereas 37% said that there was no difference in the death toll of adults and children.

[101] Twenty five percent of former child soldiers answered that adults were better fighters, and 33% suggested that both, children and adults, were good fighters depending on the circumstances.

Drug or substance abuse and physical health. Those children who do return home, in addition to mental health problems also suffer overwhelmingly from addiction to alcohol and drugs, both of which are given to child and adult recruits by many armed groups. For example, 39% of one survey participants – former child soldiers from Sierra Leone – reported being "forced to take drugs regularly."[102] Similarly, almost half of adult male combatants from Liberia used drugs during the war (44.9%) and more frequently than noncombatants.[103] Besides the intended short-term effects of these mind altering substances, manifest in increased fearlessness and bravery in combat, the drugs also tend to have a long term effect on the physical health of former fighters. During the Liberian war, for instance, child soldiers were "mainly served up a type of crack known locally as "brown-brown," which generates "irreversible consequences on the brain."[104] With several exceptions in my own survey, almost all former child soldiers from Liberia reported smoking marijuana on a daily basis – even up to ten years after disassociation with armed groups. Liberian former combatants were also reported to be "more likely to have increased their drug usage since the war ended" (12.1% increase for males).[105] Several years after the secession of armed hostilities in Liberia, the country's sole psychiatric hospital in Monrovia still treats former child soldiers for drug abuse.[106]

War-related injuries and wounds are yet another consequence of conflict participation with which former child soldiers have to cope. About 60% of former Liberian child soldiers in my survey reported being injured during the war, almost half of those more than once. Bullet or bayonet wounds were exacerbated by instances of beatings and torture. Liberian adult ex-combatants exhibited higher rates of "serious head trauma" than non-combatants.[107] Survey from the Sierra Leone reported 27% of former child soldiers to be injured or having "developed a disability as a result of their time with the fighting forces."[108]

Developmental Consequences

Socio-economic integration. Another adverse consequence of child soldiering is the potential marginalization of former combatants in a post-conflict society. Military service results in the loss of

[102] Betancourt et. al., *Psychosocial Adjustment and Social Reintegration of Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups,* p. 21.
[103] Johnson et. al., "Association of Combatant Status and Sexual Violence with Health and Mental Health Outcomes in Postconflict Liberia," pp. 682, 683. A higher percentage of drug use was reported for male combatants, as opposed to female (12.3%).
[104] Isabelle Ligner, "Liberia's Psychiatric Wasteland for Ex-child Soldiers," *Mail and Guardian Online*, Jan 15, 2009, http://www.mg.co.za/article/2009-01-15-liberias-psychiatric-wasteland-for-exchild-soldiers.
[105] Johnson et. al., "Association of Combatant Status and Sexual Violence with Health and Mental Health Outcomes in Postconflict Liberia," p. 682. Females were reported to have a lower increase of 1.2% only.
[106] Ligner, "Liberia's Psychiatric Wasteland for Ex-child Soldiers."
[107] Johnson et. al., "Association of Combatant Status and Sexual Violence With Health and Mental Health Outcomes in Postconflict Liberia," p. 683.
[108] Betancourt, et. al., *Psychosocial Adjustment and Social Reintegration of Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups,* p. 21.

education and societal stigma, both of which in turn lead to fewer economic opportunities. A study by Annan and Blattman found that the most significant impact of military service on Ugandan youth was upon their skills and productivity due to the loss of education. As they report, abducted youth attained about nine fewer months of education than non-abducted children, which lowered their skilled employment by a half and earnings by a third.[109] In contrast, consider a loss of education years for child soldiers in other conflicts who, unlike Ugandan youth with an average of nine months spent with the LRA, often stayed with armed groups for many years. For example, in my own survey, the average stay of child soldiers with Liberian factions was about four years. Meanwhile, as observed by the Amnesty International in the DRC, in the "dire economic climate" of the post-conflict society, "employment opportunities are limited for everyone and former child soldiers are at a disadvantage compared to their civilian peers who were able to continue with their schooling and are now better-educated." [110]

Besides educational loss, upon their return home or settling elsewhere in the country, former child soldiers also have to face the challenge of societal stigma. Whereas community acceptance of former child soldiers may vary from context to context, there is a reason to believe that the degree of stigmatization is linked to the level of atrocities committed by former combatants while with an armed group. According to Humphreys and Weinstein's survey of ex-fighters in Sierra Leone, "individuals who perpetrated widespread human rights abuses face significant difficulty in gaining acceptance from their families and communities after the war."[111] Meanwhile, although this study does not explore the link between community acceptance and employability, it is conceivable that societal stigma might jeopardize employment of former child soldiers, as demonstrated by the following examples. In the DRC, Amnesty International noticed instances of poor relations between former child soldiers and their co-dwellers, "with mutual distrust, prejudice and hostility," resulting in a community's assignment of jobs to other people but ex-combatants.[112] Social stigma in Rwanda led to refusal by many secondary schools to accept former child soldiers – an act that resulted in these children's decision to return to the government army after the secession of hostilities.[113]

This grim picture of poor social integration of former child soldiers is not shared by all researchers. Boothby's study of former child soldiers in Mozambique, mentioned above, found that 16 years after the war, "the vast majority" of former underage combatants "have become productive, capable, and caring

[109] Blattman and Annan, "The Consequences of Child Soldiering," p. 1.
[110] Amnesty International, *DRC: Children at War* (AI Report, 2003, AFR 62/034/2003), p. 34.
[111] Macartan Humphreys and Jeremy Weinstein, "Disentangling the Determinants of Successful Demobilization and Reintegration," Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, 2005, p. 21.
[112] AI, *DRC: Children at War*, p. 34.
[113] Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers (CSUCS), "The Use of Children as Soldiers in Africa: A Country Analysis of Child Recruitment and Participation in Armed Conflict," August 2000, http://www.reliefweb.int/library/documents/chilsold.htm.

adults."[114] Moreover, most of them "have regained a foothold in the economic life of rural Mozambique, are perceived by their spouses to be "good husbands," are taking active steps to ensure their own children's welfare, and are engaged in the collective affairs of their communities."[115] While the study of success of Mozambican former child soldiers is noteworthy, we should also take into account that this case was based on the assessment of a very small targeted, effective, and resourceful reintegration campaign, supported by the country's government and carried out by the Save the Children organization on only 39 former boy soldiers. During this particular program, all the subjects went through extensive psychological and social assistance that included counseling and community reintegration assistance.[116] Meanwhile, the existence, scope, performance, and funding of disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and rehabilitation (DDRR) programs for children and adults elsewhere in the world are varied, as I demonstrate further below.[117] Pessimistic conclusions about poor socio-economic integration of former child soldiers might, therefore, reflect a more representative trend in the post-conflict societies.

Child Soldiers and DDR Programs. Assisting children with PTSD, reintegration and other problems is not easy. While the potentially positive effect of DDR programs on the mental health adjustment of former child soldiers has been established by existing studies, such initiatives are not widespread and their success is not guaranteed.[118] Although DDR programs are more frequent nowadays, they are still not established in all post-conflict situations.[119] Consider, for instance, the following account of an NGO worker on the absence of the reintegration program in Liberia after the first war of 1989-96:

> ".. Also, another problem was that after the first disarmament, people left them [child soldiers] just like that. The process wasn't complete – there was no job training or assistance with reintegration. After 1997 the situation started going bad and because of economic hardship,

[114] Boothby, "What Happens When Child Soldiers Grow Up?" p. 244.
[115] Ibid., p. 245.
[116] In particular, these complex and profound rehabilitation efforts of Save the Children "focused on four inter-related components that were integrated into all centre activities: establishment of safety and appropriate codes of conduct, re-establishment of self-regulatory/impulse control processes, promotion of security versus survival seeking behaviour, and support of active quests to derive existential 'meaning' from violent events. Additionally, a family tracing and reunification programme, community sensitization campaigns, traditional ceremonies, and apprenticeships were set up to assist the reintegration of these boys back into their own communities" (Boothby, "What Happens When Child Soldiers Grow Up?" p. 246).
[117] Most common of these are the DDR programs, as opposed to the DDRR initiatives, because the rehabilitation stage (represented by the second R in the acronym) is the most expensive and difficult to implement. For a well specified and concise description of all four stages in the DDRR programs refer to Betancourt, et. al., *Psychosocial Adjustment and Social Reintegration of Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups,* pp. 11-12.
[118] One of the studies that established a positive influence of the DDRR programs on child soldiers' mental health was the survey of former child RUF ex-combatants in Sierra Leone. This survey revealed that informants who went through International Rescue Committee (IRC) rehabilitation services had significantly lower "hostility and depression scores," significantly higher "average confidence scores," and significantly higher scores of pro-social behaviors than those who did not (Betancourt, et. al., *Psychosocial Adjustment and Social Reintegration of Child Ex-Soldiers in Sierra Leone - Follow-Up Analysis,* p. 10).
[119] DDR programs that included child soldiers took place during and following many armed conflicts, including the ones in Nepal, Mozambique, Angola, Liberia, and Sierra Leone (Betancourt, et. al., *Psychosocial Adjustment and Social Reintegration of Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups,* p. 11).

violence came again and the same children went back into the game, but this time they did it voluntarily. While some were forced – the majority went in voluntarily."[120]

In places where DDR(R) programs were implemented, there were other issues that hampered their full effectiveness. In Liberia, for example, the international community took note of the negative consequences of the absence of reintegration programs in 1996 and launched a full-scale DDRR initiative after the second Liberian civil war of 1997-2003.[121] With about 90,000 participants and a widespread acceptance of ex-combatants into the communities, the DDRR program in Liberia was generally considered "a success."[122] Meanwhile, surveys not linked to DDR programs have not found such an overwhelming participation rate among ex-combatants. For example, a survey of 549 ex-soldiers across Liberia in 2008 found that "post-conflict DDR programs were attended by only a minority of both male and female former combatants."[123] A 2007 survey that evaluated the DDRR process in Liberia discovered the following: "the reintegration programme has failed to provide sustainable alternative livelihoods for ex-combatants" with the majority of them still being unemployed at the time, and thousands having been "regrouped for the purpose of illegally exploiting natural resources in diamond and gold mining areas, as well as on rubber plantations."[124] The widely known exclusion of girls, purposeful or inadvertent, from DDR programs in general and in Liberia specifically, has also been a well-documented tendency.[125]

Indeed, most of these problems are related to the overall lack of funding for DDR programs resulting from the short-term commitment of their donors. Consider, for example the following account of a UN worker regarding DDR funding problems, referring to the specific example of the program in Sierra Leone:

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[120] Junior Toe, Executive Director of Liberian Ex-combatants Anxious for Development (LEAD), a local nongovernmental organization in Liberia which advocates on behalf of ex-combatants, commenting for Human Rights Watch (HRW), *Youth, Poverty and Blood: The Lethal Legacy of West Africa's Regional Warriors*, Vol. 17, No. 5 (A), March 2005, http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/westafrica0405.pdf, p. 12.
[121] Thomas Jaye, "DDR and Transitional Justice in Liberia," International Center for Transitional Justice, http://www.ictj.org/en/research/projects/ddr/country-cases/2381.html.
[122] Ibid.
[123] Johnson et. al., "Association of Combatant Status and Sexual Violence With Health and Mental Health Outcomes in Postconflict Liberia," p. 683. According to some sources, not all former combatants in Liberia were apparently admitted to the DDRR programs. In addition, those ex-combatants who left the country, including former child soldiers, deprived themselves of a chance to participate in the DDRR program. In my own survey of over 200 former Liberian child soldiers residing in Ghana, for example, only one informant reported going through a DDRR program.
[124] Jaye, "DDR and Transitional Justice in Liberia," referring to the survey conducted by United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and United States Agency for International Development (USAID).
[125] For under-representation of girls in the DDR programs of Northern Uganda, Sierra Leone and Mozambique see McKay and Mazurana, *Where are the Girls?* Chapter 5. The following article also describes the failure of DDR program to address the needs of female combatants in the Liberian context: Nicole Itano, "Peace Process Often Ignores Female Ex-Soldiers," *Women's News*, June 27, 2004, URL: http://www.womensenews.org/article.cfm/dyn/aid/1886/context/archive.

> "But the other portion, the other part of the DDR process beyond family tracing and reunification is to get them [former child soldiers] back into their communities and to get them back into school. And education is not a six-month process. That is the process of several years. And the challenge we have with donors is to get them think more elastically about DDR for children including in terms of funding. One of the crises that we faced in Sierra Leone was that we had what was considered a successful DDR process including children in terms of the number of children who participated, the percentage that we were able to reunify, but the success, the ultimate success of DDR in Sierra Leone is still a story that is in writing because the UNICEF education program had tremendous challenges and difficulty in trying to maintain its level of funding for the education programs. Precisely because donor interest shifts quickly, DDR is finished in Sierra Leone." [126]

Intergenerational Violence

A problematic transition to peace in some countries, as shown in this section on the examples from Liberia, highlights yet another important consequence of child soldiering – the re-recruitment of young men and women for subsequent civil wars that occur in the same countries or elsewhere in the region. The humanitarian consequences of child soldering outlined above, when combined with the developmental repercussions of a lack of viable economic opportunities in post-conflict societies, may push former child soldiers back into violence for the sake of survival.

The recycling of child soldiers in ongoing conflicts has been reported for numerous armed struggles where they participate.[127] The cases of Angola and Liberia, however, stand out, with children re-recruited there for renewed fighting even after the conclusion of peace treaties and the cessation of earlier military activities.[128] Evidence from my own work suggests that the re-recruitment rate of former NPFL child soldiers from the first Liberian Civil War (1989-1996) into the Second Civil War (1997-2003) was about 50%. Ex-combatants from the second Liberian war, in turn, spread the conflict further around the region as former child soldiers were re-recruited to fight in the conflicts in Ivory Coast and Guinea.[129]

One reason for a re-recruitment of child soldiers is the persistence of ties between commanders and former combatants, especially underage ones. Some former Liberian child soldiers whom I interviewed in Ghana mentioned maintaining contact with their ex-commanders in Liberia, who reportedly were calling my respondents on their cell phones from time to time.[130] This persistent connection between

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[126] From my confidential interview with an official from the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, United Nations, New York, April 2005.

[127] On re-recruitment in non-terminated conflicts see reports on Sri-Lanka, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Uganda and Sudan in CSUCS, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2004*, pp. 23, 33, 54, 78, 208, 318.

[128] On re-recruitment of children for the renewed armed struggle in Angola in mid-1990s refer to Beth Verhey, "The Prevention, Demobilization and Reintegration of Child Soldiers: Angola Case Study," Working Paper, pp. 35, 57. Re-recruitment of Liberian children for the country's second civil war, as well as for regional conflicts in Ivory Coast and Guinea, is extensively covered by the following report: HRW, *Youth, Poverty and Blood.*

[129] One of my interviewees served in all three conflicts mentioned here: the first and the second Liberian wars, as well as the armed insurgency in Ivory Coast. Altogether, he spent 13 years with three different factions.

[130] Thus, one former Liberian child soldier explained to me during the interview that his commander felt "paternalistic" about him and wanted to confirm that he found a good place in life.

commanders and ex-combatants is made possible by a strong sense of group cohesion and loyalty to the organization and its leadership that children particularly develop during their stay with armed groups. The study of abductees from Northern Uganda showed that "the proportion of youth reporting that they 'ever felt allegiance to Kony' was over 30 percent among those abducted before age 11," declining to "roughly 20 percent for those abducted in their late twenties."[131] Such ties are hard to break during the demobilization and reintegration processes, especially in geographically small countries like Liberia, Burundi, and Sierra Leone. But even geography might not pose an obstacle to highly motivated recruiters: during the second Liberian war commanders from the country traveled all the way to Ghana in an attempt to re-recruit former child soldiers residing there.[132]

Another reason for the child re-recruitment phenomenon is an overwhelming economic deprivation in postconflict situations and the failure of reintegration and rehabilitation programs to assist former combatants with sustainable means of survival. The absence of employment for ex-combatants as well as inadequate provision of necessary skills for future job opportunities are the push factors behind the re-recruitment of former child soldiers. Following the 1994 Lusaka peace treaty in Angola, for example, "banditry became a major threat to peace – some of it committed by former child soldiers who viewed the gun as their best means of earning a living."[133]

The rotation of combatants, especially children, from conflict to conflict throws some countries into the vicious cycle of intergenerational violence and, as a result, never-ending wars. The trend of intergenerational violence outlined above offers two specific examples of mechanisms which Paul Collier identified behind the link between country's experience of a civil war and the armed struggle's high chance of recurrence within five years.[134] According to Collier, "once a country has stumbled into conflict powerful forces – the conflict trap – tend to lock it into a syndrome of future conflict."[135] The author speculates that one such conflict trap mechanism is that "violent conflict changes the balance of assets in the society."[136] One type of such violent-specific assets can be, for example, the "hierarchical rebel management structure."[137] As my previous reference to strong ties between commanders and their

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[131] Christopher Blattman and Jeannie Annan, "The Causes of Child Soldiering," HiCN (Households in Conflict Network), Working paper 22, January 2007, p. 20.
[132] This information was shared with me by former Liberian child combatants whom I interviewed in Ghana in 2008.
[133] Michael Wessells, Carlinda Monteiro, "Psychosocial Interventions and Post-war Reconstruction in Angola: Interweaving Western and Traditional Approaches," in Daniel Christie, Richard Wagner and Deborah Winter (eds), *Peace, Conflict, and Violence: Peace Psychology for the 21st Century* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 2001), pp. 262-275.
[134] Paul Collier, V.L Elliott, Håvard Hegre, Anke Hoeffler, Marta Reynal-Querol, Nicholas Sambanis, *Breaking the Conflict Trap: Civil War and Development Policy*, A World Bank Policy Research Report (World Bank and Oxford University Press, Washington, 2003), p. 83.
[135] Collier et. al., *Breaking the Conflict Trap*, pp. 53-54.
[136] Collier et. al., *Breaking the Conflict Trap*, p. 88.
[137] Ibid., p. 88

youngest soldiers demonstrates, child soldiering can serve as one specific example of such a mechanism at work, when violent-specific assets feed into recurrence of conflicts.

Another conflict trap mechanism which, according to Collier, increases the chance of a recurrence of civil war, is ineffective international intervention in "stabilizing the society during the first postconflict decade."[138] Insufficient international peace-building efforts, such as disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation and development that fail to reduce and sometimes even address incentives for child re-recruitment and re-enlistment, as described above, belong to specific examples of the conflict trap mechanism. One practitioner summarizes the issue quite succinctly:

> "A society that mobilizes and trains its young for war weaves violence into the fabric of life, increasing the likelihood that violence and war will be its future. Children who have been robbed of education and taught to kill often contribute to further militarization, lawlessness, and violence. The use of child soldiers also threatens fragile cease-fires and blocks reconciliation and peace. Not infrequently, conflict continues at the local level even after a cease-fire has been signed. Child soldiers are pawns in local conflicts because they provide a ready group for recruitment by warlords, profiteers, and groups that foment political instability."[139]

Geostrategic Consequences

Underage warriors may directly influence conflict onset, conflict escalation, and conflict duration – the major variables examined in the conflict studies literature. The geostrategic importance of the phenomenon is highlighted when child soldiers appear in wars involving major powers.

Conflict onset. Underage recruits may facilitate wars which otherwise would not have occurred, thus making the issue directly linked to the problem of conflict onset. Quick deployment of forces can often be a decisive element for a fast victory in the initial military offensive, with children representing a critical pool of soldiers, as some internal armed struggles demonstrate. For example, President Laurent-Désiré Kabila of the DRC enrolled thousands of children for his initial military campaign against the Mobutu government in 1996-1997.[140] In the first year of its existence, the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) under the command of Charles Taylor was recruiting children in the Nimba County and in Monrovia alike to ensure successful and expedite capture of the capital.[141] At the beginning stage of the Burundian conflict between 3,000 and 5,000 children below the age of 18 were reported to be sent to the Central African Republic, Rwanda and Tanzania for training.[142] Similarly, children were recruited by the Burundian *government* forces in substantial numbers since the start of the civil war.[143]

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[138] Ibid., p. x.
[139] Michael Wessells, "Child Soldiers," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, Chicago, Nov/Dec 1997.
[140] Human Rights Watch, "Democratic Republic of the Congo Reluctant Recruits: Children and Adults Forcibly Recruited for Military Service in North Kivu," Vol 13, No. 3, May 2001, p. 9.
[141] From the analysis of my surveys of former Liberian child soldiers in Ghana in winter 2008.
[142] Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, "Burundi," in *Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict* (New York, 2002), p.15.
[143] Ibid, p. 14.

The existence of child soldiers may not only contribute to the onset of a conflict in a home country, but also spread the violence to the neighboring states, facilitating a broader regional instability. For instance, the majority of soldiers fighting with the RUF in the first months of the conflict in Sierra Leone (1991-2000) were Liberian fighters who included significant number of children.[144] In a snow-ball effect, these very ex-combatants from Sierra Leone along with other ones from Liberia spread the armed struggle elsewhere in the region as former child soldiers of RUF and all the factions from the second Liberian war (1997-2003) were re-recruited to fight in the conflicts of neighboring Ivory Coast and Guinea.[145] Some of the Liberian commanders and recruiters clandestinely went as far as Liberian refugee settlements near Accra in Ghana in search of former child soldiers demonstrating that the considerable geographic distance was apparently worth the reward.[146]

Conflict escalation. As children boost the ranks of insurgents, fighting can further reach higher intensity than it otherwise would have been the case. While NGO and IO reports often depict child soldier conscription as a consequence of conflict escalation, it is the very presence of underage recruits that may actually enable the rebels to boost and sustain the high intensity of military confrontation. The Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) was reported to increase its recruitment of children prior to mounting an offensive in 2002.[147] Likewise, it was cited by the CSUCS that escalation of fighting in Ivory Coast in December 2002 coincided with the enlistment of children into both government and rebel forces.[148]

Conflict duration. Similar to their impact on the scale of armed contestation, child soldiers can prolong wars as they are often recruited to offset a decreasing supply of adult soldiers. In the context of high battle and indirect war-related death tolls, as well as diminishing willingness of adults to join armed movements as conflict persists, children comprise an additional resource available to belligerents. For example, thousands of children were recruited by the Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO) armed group precisely at times when it was experiencing a shortage of adult males.[149] In addition, not

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[144] Enrique Restoy, "Sierra Leone: The Revolutionary United Front (RUF), Trying to Influence an Army of Children," CSUCS, Paper presented at the Forum on Armed Groups and the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, Chateau de Bossey, Switzerland, 4 to 7 July 2006, http://www.child-soldiers.org/childsoldiers/CSC_AG_Forum_case_study_June_2006_Sierra_Leone_RUF.pdf, p. 4. "Anecdotal accounts from ex-combatants interviewed by Human Rights Watch corroborate reports from academic and official sources on the numbers involved: these estimates suggest that at least five hundred NPFL and a similar number of ULIMO fighters took part in Sierra Leone's armed conflict" (HRW, *Youth, Poverty and Blood*, p. 13).

[145] The following report is dedicated entirely to the spread of child soldier recruitment in the West African region: HRW, *Youth, Poverty and Blood,* p. 3.

[146] Information from my own interviews with former Liberian child soldiers in Ghana in winter 2008.

[147] CSUCS, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2004*, p. 76.

[148] CSUCS, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2004,* p. 59.

[149] Human Rights Watch Children's Rights Project, *Children in Combat,* January 1996, cited in Restoy, "Sierra Leone," pp. 4-5.

only do children boost the ranks of the rebels, they are actually the ones who are more likely to stay as opposed to adults who have a higher tendency to defect and run away.[150]

Moreover, the issue of child soldiering, just by contributing directly to one of these conflict features – onset, escalation, or duration, – may, in fact, indirectly affect all three of them. The literature on war and natural resources, for example, identified a link between the access of belligerents to lootable commodities and the duration of civil war, as resources acquired in war allowed armed groups to pay for and sustain their further military operations.[151] Meanwhile, all three major diamond conflicts of the 20th century – those in Angola, the DRC, and Sierra Leone – involved children. In the DRC and Sierra Leone child soldiers contributed to the onset of conflict. Thus, by enabling armed groups to access and control lootable commodities, child soldiers further lock the conflicts through the control of natural resources permitting the escalation and prolongation of the armed struggle.

Wars of great powers. The consequences of child soldier recruitment in resource-rich conflicts extend beyond their impact on internal conflict dynamics. There is a considerable geostrategic implication of the ability of child soldiering to facilitate armed struggle and help rebels gain access to natural resources. This implication is related to the fact that West African warlords of resource conflicts, in turn, often support Islamic terrorists. Thus, reports claim that Al Qaeda operatives "benefited from the sales of millions of dollars of conflict diamonds mined by rebels in Sierra Leone."[152] This link between diamond civil wars and terrorist movements is a real concern for western powers: "…Such interconnections painted West Africa not only as a "wild zone" endangering the locals, but also as a "rogue zone" threatening the West."[153] While child participation in conflicts aids the cause of local rebels and warlords, the latter may also assist other militarized actors in their wars against super-powers.

Child soldiers also have a more direct geo-strategic implication by their increasing appearance in conflict zones of great powers' direct engagement, such as Afghanistan and Iraq, thus gaining further importance for international security. For instance, in 2002 about 8,000 children were found in Afghanistan among various armed groups opposing the U.S. forces.[154] Similarly, the issue of child participation in conflict came to the U.S. Army's attention when some boys as young as 12 years of age were reported to be used by insurgent groups across Iraq to "purchase weapons, work as informants and

[150] Blattman, "Causes of Child Soldiering."
[151] Michael L. Ross, "What Do We Know about Natural Resources and Civil War?" *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 41, No. 3, May, 2004, pp. 337-356.
[152] Philippe Le Billon, "Diamond Wars? Conflict Diamonds and Geographies of Resource Wars," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 98, No. 2 (2008), pp. 345-372, at p. 361, citing Global Witness (2003) and Farah (2004).
[153] Philippe Le Billon, "Fatal Transactions: Conflict Diamonds and the (Anti)terrorist Consumer," *Antipode* 38:4 , 2006, pp. 778-801, at p. 783.
[154] Zissis, "Children in Camo."

messengers, and detonate bombs."[155] Children have also repeatedly been used as suicide bombers in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict,[156] in the war in Iraq,[157] as well as in the Chechen armed struggle.[158] The U.S. military itself sees the implications of child soldiering for its forces.[159]

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With these problematic humanitarian, developmental, and geostrategic consequences of child soldiering, the efforts of IOs and NGOs to address the problem of underage recruitment are indeed noteworthy. At the same time, according to the activists' own assessment, their initiatives have had a limited effect on child recruiters so far, if any.[160] For example, despite intense negotiations with multiple rebel leaders, "large-scale releases of children from armed forces or groups have rarely taken place before hostilities ended."[161] The deterrent impact of the international and regional tribunal courts that have recently started to prosecute individuals involved in recruitment of minors also remains uncertain.[162] However, international activists have not lost hope that these strategies can have a "beneficial effect" and "should continue wherever possible and appropriate."[163] At the same time, there is an apparent need for these mechanisms to be critically examined in order to identify their limits. More specifically, "strategies must take into account that what may be effective in influencing one group may have little impact on another," because armed groups "have widely varying characters, ideologies, aims, capacities and

[155] Ibid. Declassified information provided by Capt. Patricia Brewer, a U.S. military spokeswoman in Iraq.
[156] For further discussion on this subject please refer to the Human Rights Watch, "Erased in a Moment: Suicide Bombing Attacks Against Israeli Civilians," http://www.hrw.org/reports/2002/isrl-pa/ISRAELPA1002.pdf, and Children and Armed Conflict Unit, Defense for Children International, Palestine Section, "Use of Children in the Occupied Palestinian Territories: Perspective on Child Soldiers," July 2004, http://www.essex.ac.uk/armedcon/story_id/00205.pdf.
[157] For instances of the use of child suicide bombers in Iraq see Radio Free Europe, "Iraq: Kirkuk Suicide Bomber Believed to be a Boy," November 2, 2005, http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1062582.html; MSNBC Associated Press, "Minister: Suicide Bomber a Handicapped Child," 31 January 2005.
[158] For examples of cases involving Chechen girl and boy martyrs please refer to the following English and Russian language sources: Khassan Baiev, *The Oath: A Surgeon Under Fire*, Simon & Schuster, 2003, p. 163; Boris Mikhailov, "Soldati v korotkih shtanishkah (Soldiers in Short Pants)" *Novoye Mnenie*, 07 June 2005; "Terroristy gotoviat v shahidi detei (Terrorists Train Children for Martyrs)," *Informatsionnoe agenstvo Regioni*, 17 May 2004; Alexander Vitkovsky, "V Dospekhah Smertnikov (In the Martyrs' Armory)," *Parlamentskaya Gazeta*, Moscow, 14 February 2001; Vladimir Yanchenko, "Put k Dzhihadu (The Road to Jihad)," *Trud*, 19 January 2006; Svetlana Meteleva, "Slishkom Moloda, Chtobi Umeret (She is Too Young to Die)," *Moskovsky Komsomolets*, 2004.
[159] Centre for Emerging Threats and Opportunities, Marine Corps Warfighing Laboratory, "Child Soldiers: Implications for U.S. Forces," Seminar Report, November 2002, CETO 005-02. This report notes the possibility of increased lethality in combat involving children, as adult soldiers may get distracted by the presence of children on the battlefield. Similarly, killing children in battles often has a demoralizing effect on combat forces. One of the historical cases of such consequence, brought up by the report, is the engagement of U.S. forces with units from Hitler Youth at the end of the Second World War.
[160] CSUCS, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008*, p. 24.
[161] Ibid., p. 27.
[162] Moreover, CSUCS believes that "members of many armed groups will, in all likelihood, continue to regard themselves as beyond the reach of international justice and remain confident that national-level prosecutions are unlikely" (CSUCS, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008*, p. 27).
[163] CSUCS, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008*, p. 25.

constituencies, and they operate in diverse, often rapidly changing and frequently insecure environments."[164] Thus, "greater attention must be paid," according to the CSUCS, "to questions of where children are recruited by armed groups and, critically, why." [165]

In the presence of such a need for more research on armed groups recruiting children, my work has the potential to assist the efforts by practitioners and scholars alike to increase our understanding of what kind of non-state groups and under what circumstances they are more likely to conscript and enlist minors. Thus, I argue that armed groups which possess certain characteristics are more likely to recruit children. Those characteristics include: high fighting capacity of insurgency relative to the government, low material capacity in the form of finance channels to the organizations' leaders to compensate adult fighters (or, alternatively, higher access to natural resources), established control and access to territories at home and abroad. I also propose one contextual explanatory factor of child recruitment, which relates to the characteristic of a conflict in which an insurgency operates. More specifically, I suggest that when ethnic persecution of civilians constitutes a part of the armed struggle between the opponents, the likelihood of child recruitment is higher.

My argument also includes a proposition that such characteristic of armed groups, as their popularity among some constituencies which support the insurgents, can further dictate which of these four explanations will explain the outcome of child soldiering. Thus, my argument suggests that in dealing with popular armed groups, international organizations might expect to see child recruitment in those of them which have a higher fighting capacity and operate in conflicts with ethnic persecution. For unpopular armed groups, we might observe resort to child recruitment if rebels, again, have high fighting capacity, low financial inflows (or higher access to natural resources), and larger access to territories.

Thus, by examining (a) why some armed groups have incentives and capacity to recruit more underage soldiers than others, and (b) why some children are more vulnerable to forced and voluntary recruitment than others, in this dissertation I test and develop further our knowledge about the determinants of child recruitment. The results of such a study might, therefore, help international organizations anticipate the problem in advance and possibly take preventative measures to curb the practice before its onset. My intent is that this work's findings will contribute to new child protection strategies, as well as offer guidance to the adjustment of the existing ones towards more effective results.

[164] Ibid., p. 25.
[165] Ibid., pp. 25-26.

Roadmap

The remainder of my dissertation is organized as follows. In Chapter 2, I examine how the existing studies address the question of child soldier recruitment practice by armed groups and establish how my analysis is distinct from them. I look at the anecdotal and systematic studies alike in order to identify which child motivation and sources of vulnerability have been proposed to affect the enlistment and conscription of minors into armed factions. I also examine the existing studies on insurgents' perspective in relation to their demand for child soldiers.

In Chapter 3, I outline my explanatory framework by describing in detail my own argument, its logic and causal mechanisms. I first provide a simple version of my argument based on four explanatory factors accounting for the demand and supply of child soldiers. I then offer an extension of my theoretical framework by introducing an armed groups' characteristic of popularity, which explains different explanatory power of my four explanatory factors for those two types of insurgencies. In this chapter I also examine the alternative theoretical approaches to the study of the child soldier phenomenon and establish how my theoretical framework is different from them. At the end, I also evaluate the list of existing alternative explanations which I include into my model as control variables.

The methodology I employ in this study to test my explanations is described in Chapter 4. There, I elaborate on how I compile my data and sample for empirical testing. I explain how I collected secondary data for my large-*N* cross-group sample of 112 African insurgencies. I also elaborate on how I constructed a survey-based sample from the data which I collected during my fieldwork in Ghana on over 200 Liberian former child soldiers and non-participants of conflict. In this chapter I outline how I select my case studies, and how I operationalize and measure the concepts employed in my argument. I also describe the quantitative tools and the comparative case study approach which I utilize to test my hypotheses.

In Chapter 5, I discuss different model specifications I utilize for my statistical analysis and present the results of the first test – the large-*N* empirical analysis. I offer an interpretation of my findings, especially the ones which do not support the initial hypotheses of my dissertation. I also identify outliers in my model estimation and discuss potential reasons for nonconformity with my theoretical framework. Methodological caveat of potential endogeneity problem and ways to fix it are addressed in this chapter as well.

Comparative static and dynamic case studies comprise the second test of my explanations and are presented in Chapters 6 and 7. Chapter 6 contains a detailed examination of five Liberian armed factions during the first civil war in the country: NPFL, INPFL, Ulimo-J, Ulimo-K, and LPC. I reconstruct the values of all the independent variables in my argument and compare the predicted child soldier recruitment outcomes for those armed groups with the actual established practice, which I also identify in

this chapter. Chapter 7 introduces the conditioning variable of groups' *popularity* and examines whether it affects the relative explanatory power of my four explanatory factors for two different categories of insurgents. It also traces the changes in my explanatory factors over time for one Liberian armed faction – the NPFL. I determine whether the varying trend in child soldier practice of this group is explained by the changes in the independent variables.

A synthetic Chapter 8 describes my attempt to apply the argument to other geographic contexts beyond Africa. Thus, I examine two armed groups in conflicts of Asia and Latin America – the LTTE and the FARC. I analyze one of these groups, the FARC, further in order to demonstrate how my theoretical framework should be understood in interpreting the child soldier behavior of this faction, which at first might appear to be non-conforming with my theoretical framework.

I conclude with the summary of my findings, their interpretation, and broader implications for conflict studies, child soldier literature, and international relations. Based on the results of my work, I also suggest some practical strategies for the policy community. I discuss the limitations of this study related to definitions, data collection and analysis, and elaborate on the opportunities for future research in this field.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Rigorous research on child soldiers is still rare, despite the gravity of the problem of child soldiering and the increasing number of non-systematic, interview-based studies dedicated to the issue. To my knowledge, there has been no published or publicly available study that would attempt to answer *why and under what conditions some armed groups recruit children and others do not*?[166] The existing studies in the literature addressing the child soldier issue can be broadly divided into 1) ones that attempt to offer some answers to why children enlist with armed groups and 2) others that investigate why children might be attractive to armed groups as recruits.

Examining the answers to these questions might guide our exploration of the variance in child recruitment across military organizations. More specifically, in order to answer my research question, I model the behavior of both armed groups and children as I assess the relative presence of children among rebels. Therefore, in the literature on the subject the more relevant information for my work is the findings of the existing studies about the decisions of children to join armed groups (the supply of child soldiers) and the factors that make minors attractive and essential for recruitment from the group's perspective (the demand for child soldiers). While reviewing the existing arguments I either show that they are sustained by evidence and explain why, or outline how they are used in my model and why.

Most studies overdetermine the explanation of *why children join armed groups*, suggesting that essentially "everything contributes" to children "becoming easy prey for the recruiters" due to the extent to which armed conflicts "upturn traditional social structures."[167] "Families are dispersed and displaced, most people lose their means of living, and schools close down or deteriorate. Children are idle, destitute and bewildered by the violence they witness."[168] The biggest problem of this approach is that virtually every conflict has the mentioned effects on the society, and yet children end up with insurgents in some armed struggles while not in others.

While the reasons given in the existing studies on child enlistment are plenty, the rationale of *why armed groups recruit underage soldiers* is somewhat understudied. Thus, among the related factors are the collapse of the norm against using children in war; overwhelming spread of light weaponry suitable for minors; and a child's optimum cost-productivity ratio in the context of forced recruitment. Table 2 summarizes the factors that I have identified in my review of the existing literature. These reflect a child's motivations, vulnerability and utility from the military perspective.

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[166] A small number of studies performed a systematic examination of limited number of cases, without conducting any large-*N* analysis. Even in those rare comparisons across conflicts, however, social science methodology of comparison across cases was not employed.
[167] ILO, *Wounded Childhood*, p. 24.
[168] Ibid., p. 24.

Table 2. Potential Causes of Child Soldiering: Current State of the Literature

1. Child Motivations	*2. Child Vulnerability*	*3. Child Utility*
(Supply of Child Soldiers)	*(Demand for Child Soldiers)*	*(Demand for Child Soldiers)*
Major Factors:	Small arms proliferation	Structural factors:
Impoverishment	(Unprotected) displacement	Conflict duration
Orphaning		New wars
Lack of education and employment		
		Children Characteristics:
Marginal Factors:		Obedience
Collapse of family and societal structures		Loyalty
Militarization of daily life		Disorientation
Social, community and family values		High retention
Peer pressure		Military effectiveness
Feelings of helplessness/vulnerability		Cheap maintenance
Desire to revenge		Gullibility to propaganda and indoctrination
Identity formation		

The existing studies offering some explanatory factors behind child recruitment (both of supply and demand nature) can be further classified into four categories depending on the methodology used and the level of analysis (implicit or explicit) employed: 1) descriptive books and reports based on interviews with former child soldiers; 2) empirical cross-country macro analyses (quantitative and/or case studies); 3) empirical single-country micro-level survey-based studies; and 4) non-empirical theoretical papers. Below I review all four categories of studies in detail and, within the divide, those where children or armed groups are the primary unit of analysis.

This chapter is organized as follows. In Section 1, I first review the literature that attempts to answer the question of why children join armed groups. Here I examine and assess the explanatory power of the most cited and most empirically justifiable factors appearing in the literature and offer a brief overview of other existing explanations. I evaluate their relevance to my argument. In Section 2, I assess the utility

and offer a discussion of the predictive strength of the existing explanations for children's vulnerability to recruitment. In Section 3, conversely, I examine the existing studies reflecting on why armed groups need children and comment on their utility in answering my research question. I conclude by summarizing the gaps in the literature on child soldiers and specify how my work aims to offer a valuable contribution to our understanding of recruitment of minors.

Section 1. Child Motivations: Why do children enlist into armed groups?

In general, the NGO and IO literature on child soldiers, as well as studies by sociologists and anthropologists, tend to focus on the agency of children and the reasons behind their decisions to join military organizations.[169] As such, these works do not explore the different needs of diverse armed groups for recruiting minors. This type of literature on child soldiers stresses the importance of poverty, loss of family, and lack of education or employment as the key factors that drive children to join insurgencies. In addition, the mentioned motives also include religious or ethnic identity, militarization of daily life and idleness, "revenge, a desire to escape abusive family situations, a quest for power and excitement, protection and survival..."[170] Below I review all these factors and their relevance to my argument in more detail.

1. Poverty

Poverty has been widely cited as the leading cause for child recruitment into armed groups.[171] Strong statements about the relationship between poverty and child recruitment have been offered by several works. Graça Machel's report, for example, specifically stated that "one of the most basic reasons that children join armed groups is economic."[172] Peter Singer claims in his book that the economic factor is "a

[169] There is some debate in the literature whether children actually have a full agency to decide for themselves or not. Andvig and Gates comment on the agency of children by referring to studies on child labor. In most countries, they claim, "children must shoulder adult work responsibilities at an earlier age than is accepted in the West" (Andvig and Gates, "Recruiting Children for Armed Conflict," p. 5). They cite results of studies on child migration in India which reached a conclusion that "boys aged 12 -14 regularly made labor migration decisions independently of their parents and often without the consent or even informing the parents about their departure" (Vegard Iversen, "Segmentation and Rural Network Multipliers in Rural-urban Migration, Working Paper T 9, Development Research Centre on Migration, Globalisation and Poverty, University of Sussex, 2005, p.11, cited in Andvig and Gates, "Recruiting Children for Armed Conflict," p. 5). Andvig and Gates therefore conclude that "despite many cultural differences, it is also at about this age that children may seek military employment on their own and solve many of the simpler military tasks independently, if employed" (Andvig and Gates, "Recruiting Children for Armed Conflict," p. 5). According to Michael Wessells, however, the degree of choice exhibited by children is overstated: "Although children are politically active and make decisions to join without obvious external coercion, it is simplistic to attribute these decisions unilaterally to "free choice." The desperation and paucity of options in war zones beg the term "voluntary recruitment" and alternate terms such as "non-forced recruitment" may be more appropriate. Children may join because they have no other means of obtaining food, or they want protection or health care that's accessible only in armed groups" (Michael Wessells, "A Living Wage: The Importance of Livelihood in Reintegrating Former Child Soldiers," in Neil Boothby, Alison Strang and Michael Wessells, *A World Turned Upside Down: Social Ecologies of Children and War* (Kumarian Press, 2006).

[170] Wessells, "A Living Wage."

[171] For examples see Goodwin-Gill and Cohn, *Child Soldiers*, pp. 23, 31, and 38; Twum-Danso, *Africa's Young Soldiers*, pp. 8, 10; Barnitz, *Child Soldiers,* p. 23; Machel, *Impact of Armed Conflict on Children*, p. 11; CSUCS, "Child Soldier Use 2003," p. 2; and CSUCS, *Child Soldiers: Global Report 2001*, June 2001, http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/lib.nsf/db900SID/LGEL-5CSHGX?OpenDocument.

[172] On the basis of case study analysis, Graça Machel argues that "the children most likely to become soldiers are those from impoverished and marginalized backgrounds and those who have become separated from their families" (Machel, *Impact of Armed Conflict on Children*, p. 11).

particularly strong" one.[173] Rachel Brett and Irma Specht argue that poverty "is perhaps the most obvious common feature of child soldiers generally, which is one of the reasons why it is frequently identified as *the* cause of child soldiering."[174] Michael Wessells suggests that "one of the most common motivations for non-forced recruitment is economic – the quest for money, material gain, and status."[175] Yet other studies, while admitting that poverty matters, do not suggest that it might have a stronger predictive power of child recruitment than other factors. For example, the earliest comprehensive book on child soldiers by Guy Goodwin-Gill and Ilene Cohn identifies poverty as a factor without assigning it a greater value than other variables.[176] Alcinda Honwana also identifies poverty as one of the "push factors" among others behind a child's motivation to join an armed group.[177]

Logic of Argument. There are several ways in which the poverty argument relates to voluntary recruitment. It is quite conceivable that "chronic poverty is among the most important, if damaging, aspects of the social ecologies of war zones. Poverty corrodes the health and well-being of all children and often obstructs positive options such as education or a means of earning a living."[178] Thus, according to the Machel report, children can be given away to armed forces by impoverished parents in exchange for the child soldier's wages or loot that go directly to the family; they can volunteer themselves "if they believe that this is the only way to guarantee regular meals, clothing or medical attention"; or children can become *de facto* child soldiers if the whole family keeps moving along with the armed forces for economic reasons.[179] These scenarios resonate with the one outlined by Wessells: "some children join these groups in hope of gaining otherwise unattainable wealth, often with the goal of sending money home to help support their families."[180] Thus, children were paid by Ugandan government and militias

[173] Peter Singer, as well as Shannon McManimon, independently argue that high levels of poverty, interactively with other variables, can explain the growth in the number of child soldiers. Interaction terms whose potential effect is suggested by both authors include proliferation of small and cheap weapons, and the changing nature of warfare (Singer, *Children at War*, pp. 38, 55; Shannon McManimon, "Use of Children as Soldiers," *Foreign Policy in Focus*, Vol. 4, N. 27 (November 1999), http://www.fpif.org/briefs/vol4/v4n27child_body.html.

[174] Brett and Specht, *Young Soldiers*, p. 14. Brett and Specht call poverty "the major environmental factor" that makes children and young people "vulnerable to involvement in armed forces and armed groups." Moreover, Brett and Specht extend the poverty argument beyond conflicts to peaceful situations in which armies recruit children (Ibid, p. 14).

[175] Wessells, "A Living Wage."

[176] Goodwin-Gill and Cohn, *Child Soldiers*.

[177] Among other main push factors identified in Honwana's work are migration, political ideology, and the "mutability of youth" (Honwana, *Child Soldiers in Africa*, p. 28).

[178] Wessells, "A Living Wage."

[179] Machel, *Impact of Armed Conflict on Children*, p. 12. Often such "volunteering" involves parents "who encourage their daughters to become soldiers if their marriage prospects are poor."

[180] Wessells, "A Living Wage." Wessells brings up an account of a Cambodian boy who joined an armed group at age 13: "I send most of the money I am paid each month back home. To this day I have never admitted to my family that I am in the army – I am too afraid that they would force me to return home. How would I provide for them?" (UNICEF 2003, p. 31, cited in Wesselss, "A Living Age"). Wessells also mentions in this context that such logic is not unique only to African child soldiers, but is similar to the decision making processes of youth in the Western countries. "It would be a mistake to view voluntary (non-forced) child soldiering for economic gain as a

and by army-backed paramilitary groups in Colombia for their military services.[181] Both government forces and belligerents participate in looting, and thus children may have the opportunity to reap the benefits for themselves and their families.[182] As Wessells notes, "the power of looting as an incentive to join indicates that having a livelihood is not equated with amassing money" as "in many developing countries, wealth resides in one's possessions (even if stolen), livestock, and services useful in bartering."[183] Of course in many cases the pecuniary promises are never delivered to children and instead are used only as an incentive to attract new recruits.[184]

These mechanisms behind the poverty argument are somewhat similar to what Goodwin-Gill and Cohn propose as different scenarios of poverty effects on the child motivation to join, in line with the classical literature on the relationship between poverty and conflict. More specifically, their causal mechanisms of *survival* (children and adults join to get food for the day or "assume the risk of voluntary participation to obtain a subsistence wage") are similar to the generic logic of the poverty argument proposed by Machel.[185] The third causal mechanism of poverty, suggested by Goodwin-Gill and Cohn, however, is somewhat different and resembles more the logic of radicalization described below in this section. That is *grievance*, or the "social and economic injustice" that "motivates adults and children to take up arms, sometimes with a long-term vision of affecting change."[186] Consider how Wessells describes the importance of grievances behind decisions of young adults to join armed movements:

> "Many war zones feature a combustible mixture of unemployment, lack of educational and training opportunities, and failed expectations. The resulting sense of hopelessness and futility, coupled with the desire to change a failed political system, can convert ordinary teenagers into activists who

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phenomenon unique to developing countries. In the United States and the United Kingdom, among other places, volunteer recruits come disproportionately from lower socioeconomic classes, for whom the military offers a way out of poverty and a gateway to opportunities. Poor, young Americans are often attracted by the lure of the U. S. military, because of its successful mixture of patriotic appeals and lucrative training and education opportunities."

[181] On Uganda see CSUCS, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2004*, p. 106. On Colombia see 1) CSUCS, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2004*, p. 127; 2) Briggs, *Innocents Lost*, p. 48; 3) Human Rights Watch, *You'll Learn Not to Cry: Child Combatants in Colombia* (Human Rights Watch: New York, Washington, London, Brussels, 2003), p. 41, cited in Wessells, "A Living Wage," with an account of a Colombian boy who had joined a paramilitary group: "After school I was a baker's assistant. It was hard work and paid badly. I went to work on a farm but the work was hard too, so finally I joined the paras. I had friends inside. It paid 300,000 [U.S. $100] a month. It seemed like an easier life."

[182] This notion is supported by my interviews with former Liberian child soldiers.

[183] Wessells, "A Living Wage."

[184] This trend is supported by multiple accounts of organizations and researchers interviewing Liberian child soldiers. The following account of an East Timorese boy joining an armed group at 17 years old also demonstrates this point: "I was paid once, when I first joined the militia. I got 25,000 rupiah (about $3-$5). After that I was never paid again" (UNICEF, *Adult Wars, Child Soldiers*, p. 49).

[185] Goodwin-Gill and Cohn, *Child Soldiers*, p. 23.

[186] Ibid., p. 23. For *greed* and *grievance* concepts in the literature on civil wars please refer to Jeffrey Herbst, "Economic Incentives, Natural Resources and Conflict in Africa," *Journal of African Economies*, Vol. 9, Issue 3, 2000; Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, "Greed and Grievance in Civil War," *Oxford Economic Papers 56*, 2004; and Mats Berdal and David Malone (eds.), *Greed and Grievance: Economic Agendas in Civil Wars* (Boulder, Col: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2000).

> foment political rebellion. The radicalization of youth, which includes 15- to 24-year-olds, has played a prominent role in political change throughout history (Goldstein 2001). Young people's engagement in political rebellion is likely to be a potent force in developing countries, where people under 18 years of age comprise half the population, and economic pressures make livelihood issues a profound concern at progressively younger ages."[187]

The poverty argument can be further extended to the forced recruitment of children as well. For instance, according to Singer, the targeted children are "usually from special risk groups: street children, the rural poor, refugees, and others displaced."[188] He explains the logic of this argument by introducing the concept of "efficient recruiting sweeps" pertinent to these four groups in particular.[189] Some literature by practitioners, as Machel's report, also notes that "in all conflicts, children from wealthier and more educated families are at less risk" of forced recruitment.[190] According to Machel, these children are either left "undisturbed" or "released if their parents can buy them out" or "sent out of the country to avoid the possibility of forced conscription."[191] Poor communities may also exhibit lower resistance to forced recruitment, as they can be less capable of defending themselves and have a lower chance of becoming a strategic territory for government defense, as opposed to richer regions. Moreover, impoverished populations may possess less informational capacity to anticipate the armed groups' marches towards their settlements, as well as suffer from hampered mobility in relocating to refugee or internally displaced people's (IDP) camps.

Open Debate. Despite the intuitive appeal of the above arguments, there are a number of studies that challenge the belief that poverty matters to such a large extent, if at all. Thus, Rachel Brett states that "there are many more poor children who do not become child soldiers than do, even in war zones. What is true is that children who are not living in poverty rarely become child soldiers." This insight opens a discussion about a potential methodological problem of interview-based studies claiming causality of the poverty factor, and suggests that poverty can be only a necessary but not a sufficient condition behind child soldiering. Along similar lines, Andvig and Gates note that the contextual factor of poverty does not "vary much from one war-zone to another," while child recruitment does, again suggesting only the necessity of the poverty explanation at best. Claims of sufficiency of poverty are also countered with yet another argument by Francisco Gutierres-Sanin, who makes a valid point about the existence of alternative ways (at least in the Colombian context) of escaping poverty besides voluntary enlistment into

[187] Wessells, "A Living Wage."
[188] Singer, *Children at War*, p. 45.
[189] Ibid, p. 45.
[190] Machel, *Impact of Armed Conflict on Children*, p. 12.
[191] Ibid., p. 12.

armed groups, such as illegal crop production or migration.[192] Moreover, even when today's rich countries were poor centuries ago, they did not extensively use child soldiers.[193]

Preliminary Evidence. The existing empirical investigations neither properly refute nor overwhelmingly support the poverty argument. Many *interview-based books and reports*, as well as some *survey studies*, suggested that poverty was indeed mentioned as a reason for joining by their child soldier informants. These include the interview-based studies by Brett and Specht, Goodwin-Gill and Cohn, and UNICEF among others, which claim poverty to be an explanatory factor because they or some third party observers noticed extreme poverty among their interviewees.[194] The methodological deficiency of un-representativeness of the sample of such interview-based studies, outlined above, undermines the validity of the resulting findings about the predictive power of the poverty factor.[195] These studies do, however, shed light on the causal logic between impoverishment and child soldiering. Consider, for example, the ILO's finding that half of the 34% of former child soldiers from four African countries who claimed joining armed groups for material reasons said that "it was for their immediate survival," with the other half reporting their enrollment to be a "longterm strategy for earning a livelihood."[196]

The existing systematic *cross-country* analyses have mixed results regarding the relationship between poverty and child recruitment. In one of my coauthored works, we performed a test on the absolute levels of national poverty against child soldier rates in the sample of 19 African conflicts.[197] No relationship was established between the two variables in this context. Concerned with the size of the dataset used for this study and the potential problem of ecological fallacy, mentioned above, in my other coauthored work I attempted to increase the sample size and disaggregate the country-level data to account for the large regional variations in poverty and child soldier recruitment rates. As Goodwin-Gill and Cohn emphasize, "children differ widely, both within and across areas of armed conflict, in the nature of their pre-war and war-related experiences."[198] Meanwhile, studies that utilize nation-wide measures of factors whose effect they are trying to capture cannot account for such sub-national variation. In addition, as Beber and Blattman suggested, while child soldiering should be "more likely in poor countries where children's

[192] Francisco Gutiérrez Sanín, "Organizing Minors," Working Paper presented at the Conference "Building Knowledge about Children in Armed Conflict," University of Pittsburgh, September 2006.
[193] According to Peter Singer's historical overview of child soldier practice, "a general norm held against child soldiers across the last four millennia or warfare" (Singer, *Children at War*, p. 15).
[194] Brett and Specht, *Young Soldiers*, pp. 14-15; Goodwin-Gill and Cohn, *Child Soldiers*, pp. 23, 31, and 38; UNICEF, *Adult Wars, Child Soldiers*, pp. 31, 74.
[195] In the UNICEF study cited above, for example, 6 children altogether out of 69 respondents from different countries in East Asia and the Pacific reported "mentioned poverty as a factor that influenced their decision to join an armed group" (UNICEF, *Adult Wars, Child Soldiers*, p. 19).
[196] ILO, *Wounded Childhood*, p. 29. After conducting mini-surveys in four African countries, this ILO study suggested that poverty (or, rather *the economy in ruins* expressed in lower or absent incomes and destruction of school system) was among other factors that "put children at risk of military recruitment."
[197] Achvarina and Reich, "No Place to Hide."
[198] Goodwin-Gill and Cohn, *Child Soldiers*, p. 30.

economic opportunities are poor relative to that of adults, and where their access to education and information… is less," "the important point is that a nation's absolute poverty may not be sufficient" as "relative opportunities matter."[199]

My later cross-sectional coauthored study therefore examined the underage recruitment and absolute and relative levels of poverty in 690 regions of 52 countries in Africa in the period 1990–2004.[200] Measuring regional poverty by infant mortality rates and socioeconomic welfare indicators, we obtained mixed results. We found partial support for the poverty hypothesis by observing that regions with higher infant mortality rates were more likely to have undergone recruitment of children than regions with lower infant mortality rates. At the same time, our analysis revealed a negative relationship between poverty and child soldiering when using indices of household assets as proxies for economic well-being in the region.

Survey analysis also offers mixed findings, but with the prevalent support for the poverty hypothesis. From a survey of ex-child combatants in Sierra Leone, Humphreys and Weinstein found that the majority of former recruits were uneducated and poor, and that many had left school due to the inability to pay school fees or closure of the facilities.[201] Among the surveys suggesting that poverty matters is also the work of Martin Crill, which reports on 300 demobilized child soldiers in a DRC transit center.[202] Sixty one percent of the respondents in his survey admitted having no family income and more than half of the informants had at least six siblings. The major limitation of these studies' research design – an absence of a control sample for the analysis – makes their findings about the degree of the role of poverty in child recruitment questionable.

One way to avoid this problem of over-reporting the poverty influence, even without a comparison group, is to examine the reasons that children give for joining, as opposed to looking at the absolute numbers of poor children in the ranks of rebel movements. Once this is done, the low share of poverty behind the motives of children somewhat undermines the importance of this factor. Consider that 90% of the interviewed Islamist child soldiers from the Philippines "told about ideological reasons while none mentioned material needs."[203] Similarly, while indeed many poor children could have been found among Liberian armed groups, one survey showed that fewer than 10% of former child combatants from the country's Second Civil War referred to money as a motivation for joining, and under 10% of them

[199] Beber and Blattman, "The Industrial Organization of Rebellion," pp. 22-23. According to these authors, poor access to education and information is important since improved availability of either could make disorientation and indoctrination of children more difficult, thus diminishing the value of children for conscription.
[200] Achvarina et. al., "Regional Poverty and Child Soldier Recruitment." 296 of these 690 regions were affected by conflict in 28 countries during that time.
[201] Macartan Humphreys and Jeremy M. Weinstein, "What the Fighters Say: A Survey of Ex-Combatants in Sierra Leone," CGSD Working Paper 20, 2004, p. 2.
[202] Martin Crill, *The Demobilisation and Reintegration of Former Child Soldiers in the Democratic Republic of Congo, A consultancy report for Save the Children UK*, November 2000.
[203] Andvig and Gates, "Recruiting Children for Armed Conflict," p. 13

said they joined because people in the armed group "lived better," altogether making economic reasons prevalent in under 20% of all respondents.[204]

The Liberian example cited above also suggests that the *survivalist* motive behind children's enlistment into armed groups, probably more common for African contexts, is further complemented by the motives of *greed*. After analyzing data on former combatants in Colombia, both children and adults, Gutierrez-Sanin's work revealed that "by far and large the FARC members had a job *before* joining, and earned *above* the national average."[205] Thus, the enlistment was probably not dictated by a survivalist strategy. However, this study did not find a similar empirical support for the relative, as opposed to absolute poverty, with only a small set of Colombian young peasants in the sample reporting entering an armed organization that offered "much worse material conditions than what they had."[206]

When the actual comparison of recruited and non-recruited children is performed, however, conclusions about the importance of the poverty factor seem to fade. Consider, for example, that one survey cited above referred to the importance of poverty after observing a high number of six siblings among former child soldiers in the DRC.[207] A simple comparison with the rest of the population, meanwhile, reveals no difference between the cited number of siblings and the average country fertility rate of 6.3 - 6.7 children per woman during the 1990s.[208] The findings of surveys with control sample generated partial support for the poverty argument. For example, the study of Blattman and Annan on child soldiering in Northern Uganda revealed that child soldiers enlisted into the Local Defense Units (LDU) militia came "from poorer and more agricultural households."[209] Meanwhile, the forced conscription of youth by the LRA armed group was not found to be predicated on the poverty levels of the subjects in this study.[210]

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[204] James B. Pugel, "Disaggregating the Causal Factors Unique to Child Soldiering," Paper presented at the Child Soldiers Initiative Working Group Session in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 15-16 September 2006, Figure 3 on p. 13.
[205] Gutiérrez Sanín, "Organizing Minors," p. 25.
[206] Ibid., p. 27.
[207] Crill, *The Demobilisation and Reintegration of Former Child Soldiers in the Democratic Republic of Congo*.
[208] *International Medical Corps UK Statistics*, http://www.imcworldwide.org.uk/wherewework.asp?pageid=64; *Global Virtual University Statistics*, http://globalis.gvu.unu.edu/indicator_detail.cfm?IndicatorID=138&Country=CD. Other measures of poverty, mentioned here, such as level of education, school attendance and ability to pay school fees, as well as family income levels will be tested in my survey analysis of former Liberian child soldiers.
[209] Blattman and Annan, "The Causes of Child Soldiering," p. 12. "Unlike the case of LRA abduction, a test of the joint significance of all household characteristics in predicting LDU membership yields a highly significant p-value of 0.02. Moreover, even when not statistically significant, the coefficients in the militia regressions are generally more influential."
[210] While poverty did not seem to affect the LRA's recruitment strategy, poorer children were nevertheless found to stay with belligerents longer. Thus, in his earlier paper Blattman identified that landholdings and cattle possessions by the young recruits' families were negatively (albeit insignificantly) associated with the length of stay of the abductees with the armed group (Christopher Blattman, "The Causes of Child Soldiering: Theory and Evidence from Northern Uganda," Working Paper, January 2007, pp. 14, 21). Considering that the LRA and especially its

In sum, poverty has been mentioned by many studies as a factor with significant predictive power in explaining the instance of child recruitment. Some studies claim that up to 20% of children reported poverty as the reason behind their decision to join armed groups and, therefore, poverty might indeed be one of the factors, albeit not the strongest one, behind child recruitment. As the same time, however, the existing studies that tested the poverty argument either suffer from methodological problems or provide mixed evidence for such a claim. Thus, cross-sectional studies have mixed results, with support for the argument increasing with the level of desegregation of the data on poverty. Micro level surveys provide somewhat inconclusive evidence for the poverty argument.

In addition, the literature on child soldiers still debates the necessity of poverty for child recruitment from the theoretical point of view. Therefore, with mixed results of the previous studies and debatable rationale behind the poverty argument, I do not choose poverty to be a potential key explanatory factor in my analysis. However, due to the attention that this factor obtained in both empirical and theoretical literature, I do control for its effects when examining other factors by including it as one of the control variables into my model.

2. Orphaning

Whether related to a conflict or exhibited in the country's pre-war levels, orphaning has been cited in the literature as a distinct factor leading to child enlistment into armed groups. Descriptive monographs by Afua Twum-Danso and Laura Barnitz claim that children from a "disrupted family background" are more likely to join armed forces and that "loss of parents and family" and "weakened bonds with family members" increase the chances of children to end up with armed groups.[211] HRW and UNICEF reports also note that orphans are particularly vulnerable to recruitment and provide narratives that describe the recruitment of orphans and illustrate this point.[212] Russian history bears examples of the so-called "syny polka" (regiment's sons) – children orphaned by the war clung to the armed forces in search of protection during the Second World War. During the same historical period, the leaders of the Jewish resistance movement specifically targeted orphans in their recruiting campaign.[213]

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leader Joseph Kony were not the best examples of the most rational actors, I will offer my own survey-based test of the role of poverty in the forced recruitment in the context of Liberian conflict.

[211] Twum-Danso, *Africa's Young Soldiers*; Laura Barnitz, *Child Soldiers*. Both works derive the significance of orphans as a determinant of child soldier rates from the interview-based study of Brett and McCallin (Brett and McCallin, *Children*).

[212] Human Rights Watch, "Stop the Use of Child Soldiers! U.S. Congress Condemns the Use of Children," http://hrw.org/campaigns/crp/congress.htm; HRW, *Easy Prey*, pp. 15-19, and UNICEF, *Adult Wars, Child Soldiers,* p. 19 (UNICEF reports that six boys from 69 interviewed "were orphaned and two were abandoned by their parents and left to live with relatives").

[213] Consider, for instance, the following example from the book of David Rosen: "Ruzka Korczak, who did much of the recruiting for the underground fighting forces in Vilna, spent considerable time contacting children on the streets of Vilna ghetto for possible recruitment. She focused her efforts on orphans who showed a sense of defiance" (David M. Rosen, *Armies of the Young: Child Soldiers in War and Terrorism* (Rutgers University Press: New

Logic of Argument. It is easily conceivable that orphaned children will search for protection among armed groups, especially in the absence of other viable structures in the society to take care of them.[214] This survivalist logic is suggested by many accounts in the practitioners' literature, most of which resemble the one cited in the ILO report: "during the war in 1998-99, the whole family was dispersed and I was left alone. To be able to survive, I had to join a group of 'Cocoyes'."[215] As Singer suggests, "children, particularly those orphaned or disconnected from civil society, may volunteer to join any group if they believe that this is the only way to guarantee regular meals, clothing, or medical attention."[216] This problem, according to Singer, "is similar to regions where warfare, disease and disasters have left children without shelter or family," and children orphaned by AIDS in many parts of Africa are vulnerable to recruitment.[217] An alternative logic of the 'orphans argument' was uncovered in the surveys of the ILO of former child soldiers from Burundi, Congo, the DRC, and Rwanda. According to this report, "very often it is the death or departure of the father or big brother that disrupts the family, leaving the mother on her own to shoulder both the material and moral responsibility for the children."[218] As a result, some children quit school and join the idle gangs as a precursor for enlistment into an armed group.[219]

Preliminary Evidence. According to Singer, in Afghanistan children associated with Taliban were primarily "kids who have lost their parents, kids who wouldn't be able to get a square meal anywhere else, kids who join because it's the *only way to stay alive*."[220] However, this statement was not backed by any interviews or surveys of former Taliban young combatants. Similar unsubstantiated claims about the large numbers of orphans in armed forces were made for the Uganda National Resistance Army (NRA) and the NPFL armed group in Liberia.[221] Humphreys and Weinstein's survey recorded many subjects among ex-combatants in Sierra Leone who lost one or both parents prior to recruitment.[222]

Brunswick, New Jersey, and London, 2005), p. 37. Rosen makes a reference to Rich Cohen, *The Avengers: A Jewish War Story* (New York: Vintage Books, 2000), p. 59).

[214] In many African cultures the extended families usually take care of orphans. However, this capacity of the society might come under pressure during the conflicts, especially protracted ones, as the following example demonstrates: in Uganda "many people explain that orphans used to be absorbed into families without any problem but that families are now overstretched with too many orphans due to war violence and disease" (Blattman, Annan and Horton, *The State of Youth and Youth Protection in Northern Uganda*, p. 15).

[215] ILO, *Wounded Childhood*, p. 29.

[216] Singer, *Children at War*, p. 62.

[217] Peter Singer cited in Zissis, "Children in Camo."

[218] ILO, *Wounded Childhood*, p. 25.

[219] This was the case of one former child soldier whose mother was interviewed by the ILO researchers.

[220] Peter Singer cited in Zissis, "Children in Camo." Italics font added.

[221] The claim about the NRA forces was made on the basis of one interview with a Ugandan official (Goodwin-Gill and Cohn, *Child Soldiers*, p. 34). The information about NPFL orphan soldiers comes from HRW, *Easy Prey*, p. 8 (This report does not specify the source on which it bases its claim about orphans. However, elsewhere in the text (p. 24) it cites an interview with the brother of one of the Liberian armed factions' leader – the ULIMO-K's Alihaji Kromah. Indeed, such an interview might be somewhat biased as the leadership may aim to appear as legitimate as possible by downplaying its image of child recruiters and instead posing as child saviors).

[222] Humphreys and Weinstein, "What the Fighters Say," p. 2.

My previous coauthored work represents the only *cross-country* study known to me that tested and refuted the relationship between orphans (measured as a percentage of orphaned children to the total population of children in a country) and child soldiers (measured as a percentage of children to all belligerents in the conflict).[223] The absence of an affirmative finding in this particular work, however, might be subject to the aforementioned problem of ecological fallacy and, therefore, it is important to examine what the survey studies of individuals have to say about children's personal situations in regard to orphaning.

The *surveys* that recorded the percentage of former child soldiers who were orphaned prior to recruitment generally provide a figure of around 10-20%. Thus, the survey of underage recruits of Mai-Mai armed group in the DRC revealed that 12% of all respondents were orphans.[224] In my own survey of Liberian ex-combatants, that number fell somewhere between 13% and 22%.[225] Similarly, over 15% of surveyed children who served in the armed groups in Burundi, Congo, DRC, and Rwanda, were found to be separated from their parents at the moment of recruitment.[226] Twenty percent of young conscripts in Angola also reported to live without parents prior to their entry into armed groups.[227]

The proportion of orphaned child soldiers to all conscripted children might be even larger if we consider children who lost only one parent and also became vulnerable to recruitment from the 'orphans argument' point of view. Using such a calculation, we would observe the cited percentage of orphaned children in the Mai-Mai armed group example rising from 12% to 44%. For the Liberian example the number would increase from between 13% and 22% to 54%. The survey of child soldiers from the LTTE in Sri Lanka shows a similar proportion of 53% of respondents coming from families that are separated or where one parent has remarried or where one parent died.[228]

While the fraction of orphaned children to all conscripted youth indeed supports the 'orphans argument', it would be premature to jump to conclusions about the explanatory power of this factor

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[223] Achvarina and Reich, "No Place to Hide," pp. 145-146.

[224] Nicolas Clemesac, *Understanding the Phenomenon of Child Soldiers* (Bujumbura: JRS Grands Lacs, February 2007), p. 9.

[225] The figure of 13% stands for the ratio of clearly identified orphans in my sample of former child soldiers. Due to the nature of questions posed in my survey, however, it was not possible to establish for sure if children, who lost their parents in the year of recruitment, became orphans prior to their entry into the armed group or afterwards. Similarly, it could not be confirmed if one small group of children in my sample lost both or just one parent prior to recruitment. Altogether, these ambiguous cases added up to 9% of all respondents. Therefore, the actual number of orphans in my sample could fall anywhere in between 13% and 22%.

[226] ILO, *Wounded Childhood*, p. 30. Several children testified to the ILO researchers that "they were in a situation of economic distress, having to fend for themselves for food and shelter… They fled their villages after combat that proved fatal for their relatives, and wandered about alone, hiding themselves in the surrounding area. In these circumstances, the enrolment in the armed group came as a relief to them."

[227] Verhey, "The Prevention, Demobilization And Reintegration Of Child Soldiers," p. 43.

[228] Save the Children, *Reaching All: Core Principles for Working with Children Associated with Armed Groups*, (London: Save the Children UK, March 2005), p. 5. It is not clear from the survey whether this percent includes double orphans – children who lost both parents.

without juxtaposing these percentages against the control sample of children who have never joined or have never been taken by armed groups. Neither of the above survey examples, except my own, examined the significance of differences between these two groups. There is only one study that I am aware of, besides my own research, that looked comparatively at orphan rates among recruited and non-recruited children. In his analysis of survey of youth abductions in Northern Uganda, Chris Blattman found that orphaning did not appear as a determinant for selection of young candidates into the armed group.[229] This finding, however, should be interpreted in the context of overwhelmingly forced recruitment by the LRA armed group. Meanwhile, as mentioned above, the logic of the 'orphans argument' applies mostly to the voluntary enlistment, upon which orphaned children are more likely to search for protection, shelter, food and some substitute organization instead of the lost family.

What the survey by Blattman also suggests, however, is that "younger abductees respond to poor outside options, especially orphaning, by remaining with the LRA longer."[230] This finding does offer hypothetical support for the logic of the 'orphans argument' when applied in the situations of voluntary enlistment. It also suggests that more strategic armed groups than the LRA and the ones that learn from their experience of recruiting children, might prefer orphaned children even in the situations of forced recruitment, since "the adolescents are, on average, more lasting and loyal recruits [as opposed to adults] since they are more likely to respond to family loss and dislocation by remaining with the rebel group."[231]

Overall, the existing evidence in favor of the 'orphans argument' is insufficient to warrant a definitive conclusion. While cross-sectional macro studies exhibit varying results, micro level surveys have not yet included a study that would provide a comparison group of non-conscripted children covering both forced and voluntary recruitment. Without conducting a micro-level analysis, it is also virtually impossible to subject the variable of orphans to a proper test, as national levels of poverty might not necessarily represent the actual orphan rates in rebel areas of operation or among those who joined their ranks.

3. Inadequate Social Structures: Lack of Education and Unemployment

Somewhat related to the poverty argument is the claim that the lack of education and employment opportunities might affect child decisions to join armed groups. According to Wessells, the collapse of the *education* system during armed struggle (as well as a lack of access to free basic education in many developing countries during peacetime) produces generation of idle and disgruntled youth. High *unemployment* levels of up to 80% in some war zones "create emotional burdens on young people."[232] The "youth bulge" hypothesis in the conflict literature postulates that high prevalence of young people

[229] Blattman, "The Causes of Child Soldiering," pp. 2, 14.
[230] Blattman, "The Causes of Child Soldiering," p. 21. This effect, according to Blattman, is declining with age, and the gap between orphans and non-orphans closes around the age of 20.
[231] Blattman, "The Causes of Child Soldiering," p. 21.
[232] Wessells, "A Living Wage."

(between 15 and 25 years old) in the society may lead to an armed political violence especially when coupled with high levels of unemployment or lack of education opportunities.[233] Not only "abundant supply of youths with low opportunity costs" may provide "greater opportunities for violence," but also "stronger motives for violence may arise as youth bulges are more likely to experience institutional crowding, in particular unemployment."[234] Indeed, "present economic hardship and a lack of future economic alternatives alienate youth and children from the prevailing order, plant the seeds for revolution, and propel children into armed groups."[235]

This is exactly what researchers claim happened in the context of Sierra Leonean conflict. According to Richards, a lack of access to education in Sierra Leone "sparked the discontent that fueled youths' desire to join the rebel group called the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), and overthrow the government."[236] "The ravages of war…foreclose or sharply reduce these [job] opportunities, casting many young men into a state of unemployment, idling, and hopelessness."[237] Consider the following account of a youth from Sierra Leone that emphasizes this point:

> "There is no job facility. You will see educated youths without jobs, just moving around. If at the end of the day that person hears about some rebels, he can join them, just to survive. That is why most of these guys decided to join the rebels, because they were not having jobs. Some were educated, but they decided to join the rebels instead of sitting down and waste their time. That is why most of the youths joined the rebels. That is the major reason. Because of lack of jobs."[238]

From their surveys of ex-combatants in Sierra Leone, many of whom were under age at the time of demobilization, Humphreys and Weinstein also found that many of former recruits had left school due to an inability to pay school fees or closure of the facilities.[239]

Again, without a comparison sample, it is hard to assess by how much school attendance and employment opportunities actually precludes adolescents from enlisting in armed groups or getting conscripted by rebels. Consider, for example, the figure that was reported for the former child soldiers of the Mai-Mai military faction in the DRC, with only 52% of underage recruits attending school prior to

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[233] Joshua Goldstein, "Demography, Environment, and Security," in Paul Diehl and Nils Petter Gleditsch (eds.), *Environmental Conflict* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 2001) and Henrik Urdal, "The Devil in the Demographics: The Effect of Youth Bulges on Domestic Armed Conflict, 1950-2000," Paper No. 14, Social Development Papers (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2004), cited in Wessells, "A Living Wage."
[234] Henrik Urdal, "A Clash of Generations? Youth Bulges and Political Violence," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 50, 2006, pp. 607–629, at p. 607.
[235] Wessells, "A Living Wage."
[236] Paul Richards, *Fighting for the Rainforest: War, Youth and Resources in Sierra Leone*, Oxford: Heineman, 1996), cited in Wessells, "A Living Wage."
[237] Ibid.
[238] Krijn Peters, *Re-examining Volunteerism: Youth Combatants in Sierra Leone,* Monograph No. 100, (Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 2004), p. 15, cited in Wessells, "A Living Wage."
[239] Humphreys and Weinstein, "What the Fighters Say," p. 2.

recruitment.[240] This percentage, meanwhile, cannot be regarded as representative of certain recruitment or enlistment strategy, as the national average of school attendance in the country was also reported to be around 50%.[241] Liberian youth from my interviews in Ghana named the non-existence of free education and job opportunities in the refugee camps as the reasons of re-recruitment of former child soldiers from there. At the same time, however, all camp dwellers were facing similar constraints and yet most of them did not join fighting groups to go back to Liberia for such a risky enterprise.

An interesting point can be raised from comparing the examples cited above with the results of the following study: analysis of the data collected from the 4,306 Liberian child soldiers who demobilized in 1996-1997 revealed that more than four-fifths (82%) of the children had been attending school when the war started.[242] This example demonstrates that the massive recruitment of children may occur even in countries with the proper pre-war education system establishments. Overall, I therefore argue that from the methodological point of view, it cannot be claimed that the lack of education and unemployment can explain the variance of child soldier recruitment across different armed groups or conflicts. In other words, while most (if not all) conflicts face the collapse of the societal structures, not all of them feature recruitment of children. Similarly, as the examples above demonstrate, the existence of a pre-war education system does not spare certain countries from child recruitment during armed struggle. As such, therefore, the factor of inadequate social structures cannot be considered crucial in explaining child soldier recruitment.

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In my argument I do account for a child's motivations. However, I argue that the first of them outlined in this section – namely *poverty* – is less important in explaining the difference in child soldier recruitment than other factors accounting for the motivations of children. For example, in my model I propose that high insecurity experienced by children in the highly dangerous contexts of some conflicts, especially the ones marked by *ethnic persecution*, motivates them to join armed groups and, at the same time, justifies the 'protectionist' behavior of insurgents accepting minors into their ranks. The term *ethnic persecution* is used in my work to signify mass killings of civilians on ethnic grounds by any party to the conflict, as opposed to non-targeted collateral civilian casualties of ongoing battles.

Thus, I suggest that the factor of *ethnic persecution* can better predict child recruitment than the poverty argument. Theoretically, unprotected and vulnerable children have higher chances of joining

[240] Clemesac, *Understanding the Phenomenon of Child Soldiers*, p. 9.
[241] Save the Children, "Return to the Cradle: Demobilisation and Reintegration of Child Soldiers in DRC," 2003, cited in Clemesac, *Understanding the Phenomenon of Child Soldiers*, p. 9.
[242] "Education was disrupted as schools were turned into training camps or destroyed in battle. The pre-war school attendance rate fell from 82% to zero. In 1999, the World Health Organization reported that 75% of high-school children in Monrovia had witnessed someone being raped, tortured or killed" (Olawale Ismail, "Liberia's Child Combatants: Paying the Price of Neglect," *Conflict, Security & Development*, Vol. 2, Issue 2, 2002, p. 125).

rebels than the ones simply living in poverty. All the conflicts create poverty, to one degree or another. Yet, recruitment pools differ substantially from one conflict situation to another. All African countries are extremely poor. Nonetheless, we do observe some African insurgencies having higher child soldier rates than others. As to insecurity, however, I argue that this characteristic affecting child motivations actually varies from one context of armed struggle to another. Some civil wars are bloodier that others; some insurgencies are more cruel to civilians than others; some governments are tougher on the rebel support bases than others.

As to the factors of *orphaning* and *inadequate social structures*, I argue that my factor of insecurity, or *ethnic persecution*, is superior as it encompasses in a measurable (and thus testable) conceptualization of both of these variables. Thus, in my large-*N* analysis I treat *orphaning* as a special case within the outcomes of *ethnic persecution* in a country. I argue that killings and prosecutions in a conflict along ethnic lines create especially vulnerable populations of both adults and children of a certain ethnicity who willingly seek armed protection in militarized organizations. In a sense, while orphans generally may or may not represent a vulnerable group of children seeking armed protection, the orphans of the most unprotected ethnic groups indeed contribute to the pool of volunteers, both children and adults. Therefore, I argue, the orphaning element is embedded in the ethnic persecution in a country and, as such, is accounted for in my explanatory model.

As to the *inadequate social structures* argument, I also suggest that it might constitute merely one of the mechanisms behind my factor of conflict intensity measured by *fighting capacity*. Different conflict intensity might result in a different degree of the disruption or collapse of educational and employment structures within a society. While the factor of *inadequate social structures* would be very hard to measure and thus account for in the empirical analysis, I look at the variable of *conflict intensity* instead and use it as a proxy for *inadequate social structures*.

4. Other Factors

Aside from the primary factors of *poverty*, *orphaning*, and *lack of education and employment*, which the literature on child soldiering cited virtually uniformly and even subjected to some degree of empirical examination or testing, many other explanations of a child's motivations have also been offered by practitioners and academics, but without any empirical justification. Such explanations include *collapse of societal structures, militarization of daily life, feelings of helplessness and vulnerability, desire for revenge*, and mere *proximity to a conflict zone*. However, all these factors, I argue, can be essentially viewed as consequences of any armed conflict. Their extent might vary only with the intensity of armed struggle for which I control in my analysis.

Some other potential explanations of child enlistment into armed groups, such as *peer pressure* or *identity formation*, are pertinent to child characteristics in all societies including the ones with conflicts

characterized by varying degrees of child recruitment. Thus, all these specific factors might indicate a certain prevalence of characteristics in the profile of a child soldier once he or she is recruited, but they might not serve as predictors of the practice of child soldiering to occur in the first place. For that, it has to be shown by survey analysis that all these features vary significantly between the individuals who joined rebels and those who did not.

Section 2. Child Vulnerability: What makes minors susceptible to recruitment?

Several factors in the literature are suggested to contribute to the child recruitment phenomenon but at the same time they neither affect children's decisions to enlist per se nor change the preferences of armed groups to recruit minors. These factors refer more to the vulnerability of children as a group and include the *spread of small arms* and prevalence of *displacement* during the conflict, especially in unprotected environments. They are identified as the most cited in this kind of the literature and thus will be reviewed in this section in more detail.

1. Small Arms

The rapid spread of small arms into regions of new conflicts is widely believed to be a reason for growth in child soldiers' numbers.[243] According to the UNICEF, for example, "one consequence of the availability of small arms and light weapons and their subsequent use in conflicts around the world is the unconscionable use of CAFF [children associated with fighting forces]."[244] In the words of Shannon McManimon of the American Friends Service Committee, "Th[e] use of children in war is greatly facilitated by an estimated 500 million small arms and assault weapons worldwide. These weapons are very inexpensive—an AK-47 and two clips of ammunition can be bought for $12 on the Mozambican border. They are also durable, small, lightweight, easy to maintain, and simple enough for a 10-year-old to handle."[245] Peter Singer argued that the flood of arms into the international market after the end of the Cold War and technological improvements that have made small arms lighter and easier for children to use were two out of the three major factors contributing to the rise of child soldiers.[246]

The small arms argument, however, suffers from several methodological and empirical problems. The most serious one is probably posed by the notion that the small arms explanation represents neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for an armed group to engage in child soldier recruitment practice. As

[243] Singer, *Children at War*, pp. 38, 55; The Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, *Preventing Deadly Conflict: Small Arms Survey* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 203-231; Keith Krause, "Multilateral Diplomacy, Norm Building, and U.N. Conferences: The Case of Small Arms and Light Weapons," *Global Governance,* Vol. 8, No. 2 (April-June, 2002), pp. 247-263; and Thomas Jackson, Nicholas Marsh, Taylor Owen and Anne Thurin, *Who Takes the Bullet? The Impact of Small Arms Violence*, Understanding the Issues Series, Report No. 3/2005 (Oslo: Norwegian Church Aid, 2005). For more background on the small arms issue, including the United Nations 2001 Programme of Action, see http://www.iansa.org, http://www.smallarmssurvey.org, http://www.nisat.org.

[244] UNICEF, "No Guns, Please: We Are Children," UNICEF Booklet, 2001.

[245] McManimon, "Use of Children as Soldiers."

[246] Singer, *Children at War*, p. 38.

to its necessity, there are plenty of cases when the absence of small arms did not discourage participation of children in armed groups. Consider, for instance, the issue of arms shortage in a historical example of Jewish resistance during the Second World War, for which underage youth was actively mobilized. "The most pressing problem for ghetto fighters, outside of war itself," according to David Rosen, "was the shortage of weapons."[247] Thus, "in the Warsaw ghetto, the Jewish fighting organization (JFO)… had virtually no arms when it was formed in 1942."[248] Liberian armed group of the NPFL had children in its ranks from the very onset of the militarized movement, when insurgents suffered from a lack of weaponry.[249] The Rwandan genocide of 1994 is especially notorious in this regard as both adults and children participated in massacres with indigenously ubiquitous weapons – the machetes. The small arms argument does not exhibit the characteristics of being a sufficient explanation either. The increased spread of small arms does not make children the primary users of such weapons because the latter might be demanded by and distributed among adults.

In my previous coauthored work we also point out some other problems with the small arms argument.[250] First, we argue that globalization of small arms causes criminalized violence, which, in turn, is probably more responsible for recruitment of children than small arms themselves. Second, the lightness of small arms does not necessarily ensure that children may use these weapons effectively due to, for instance, the recoil force that may be very powerful despite the lightness of the weapon. Third, and most importantly, the use of children is often depicted in the context of logistic supportive roles and as "cannon fodder" in battle – tasks that do not require a possession of a weapon. Indeed, according to the survey of former child soldiers in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea, their "tasks were generally diverse and did not necessarily involve the use of firearms... In more poorly organized and equipped groups, CAFF also portered weapons and ammunition, and maintained the firearms of superiors."[251] Alternatively, children are often sacrificed in combat by military commanders when used as "cannon fodder" and "sent into battle unarmed as a diversionary tactic…."[252] The latter two reasons could have been the real motives behind a somewhat different interpretation of such tactics used by the LRA: "often

[247] Rosen, *Armies of the Young*, p. 41.
[248] Ibid., p. 41.
[249] Isabelle Duyvesteyn, *Clausewitz and African War: Politics and Strategy in Liberia and Somalia* (London, New York: Frank Cass, 2004), p. 27.
[250] For detailed overview of all of these problems please refer to Achvarina and Reich, "No Placed to Hide" pp. 136-138.
[251] Wille, "Children Associated with Fighting Forces (CAFF) and Small Arms in the Mano River Union (MRU)," p. 182.
[252] Achvarina and Reich, "No Place to Hide," p. 137. For a discussion of how children played this role in the first Liberian conflict, see HRW, *Easy Prey*, pp. 32-34.

guided by dreams of spiritual signs, he [Kony] sent them [children] into battle unarmed. When moving toward an objective, commanders forced them to march in a single file and essentially act as shields."[253]

The fourth problem of the small arms argument identified in my coauthored work was a lack of data on the actual stocks of small arms available to different armed groups. This problem has been reduced somewhat recently when the qualitative data on armed groups' ability to procure arms became available. However, these data in my sample of 111 African armed groups showed no statistically significant difference between the mean arms procurement capability of insurgents who used child soldiers and those who did not.[254] Due to all the reasons contradicting the small arms argument cited above, I do not consider it to be a crucial factor in explaining the variation in child recruitment practice by armed groups.

2. (Unprotected) Displacement

In my previous coauthored work, I have argued and empirically tested that the key determinant of recruitment of children is their particular vulnerability to conscription or abduction from refugee and IDP camps. Existing literature on child soldiers, as well as refugee and IDP studies, have drawn attention to the fact of vulnerability of displaced children to forced and voluntary recruitment, pointing out frequent evidence of this practice. Graça Machel's report states that "ideally, camps for refugees or the internally displaced should be places of safety, offering protection and assistance. However […] there are often high levels of violence, substance abuse, sexual assault, domestic violence and forcible recruitment."[255] The report also stresses that one subgroup of displaced children, namely the ones separated from their parents, constitute "one of the categories most 'at risk' of becoming child soldiers."[256] The UNHCR also suggests that "refugee children are among the most vulnerable groups in the world" and "are disproportionately likely to be victims of sexual abuse or military recruitment."[257] As Harrell-Bond puts it, "perhaps the worst threat refugee children face is that of forcible recruitment into the armies of guerrilla fighters. Being in a camp is no protection from this."[258] Rachel Brett argues that "even if children escape from an immediate war zone, they may not escape recruitment. Some refugee camps have been militarized. Cross-border recruitment is a problem."[259] According to Lisa Alfredson, "displacement and child recruitment are not merely parallel or unrelated offshoots of war; they are often deeply inter-related. In fact, whether

[253] Briggs, *Innocents Lost*, p. 122.
[254] For more detailed description of how the ability of armed groups was measured in the existing data refer to the empirical results of this dissertation in Chapter 5.
[255] Machel, *Impact of Armed Conflict on Children*.
[256] Ibid.
[257] UNICEF, "Implementation Handbook for the Convention on the Rights of the Child," p. 309.
[258] Barbara Harrell-Bond, "Are Refugee Camps Good for Children?" *The Journal of Humanitarian Assistance*, August 2000.
[259] Rachel Brett, "The Connection between Flight and Child Soldiers," *Refugees* (UNHCR), vol. 1, no. 122, 2002, p. 19.

during war or peace, there appears to be a strong correlation between risk of recruitment during displacement, as well as risk of displacement as an outcome of recruitment."[260]

Logic of Argument. It is conceivable that camps are ideal places for *forced* recruitment of children for several reasons, including lack of civilians outside of camps, proximity of camps to conflict zones, demographics of camps skewed towards an overwhelming presence of children, availability of humanitarian aid in camps, and lack of physical protection or international community presence serving as a deterrence to such behavior.[261] There might also be several logical explanations for the occurrence of *voluntary* recruitment of children in refugee camps. According to one study, "refugees' sense of frustration, loss and resentment" sometimes related to "traumatic experiences which caused their flight"; "their marginalization vis-à-vis domestic political processes; their tremendous dependency on the outside world, not only for economic survival, but also for information and empowerment," – all can either contribute to the rise of sympathy for the rebels (as in case of Hutu refugees in Tanzania) or make refugees extremely vulnerable to exploitation and manipulation.[262] In the case of internally displaced children, all these general reasons should also hold, adding further difficulties in coping with extreme idleness in the absence of education, especially secondary, in most refugee and IDP camps.[263] If the poverty argument proves to be valid in general, it could then be also applied to refugee and IDP camps. Voluntary recruitment can be seen as an option to hunger if camps are unassisted, as it is often the case.[264]

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[260] Lisa Alfredson, "Child Soldiers, Displacement and Human Security," *Disarmament Forum*, Children and Security, 2002.

[261] Lack of civilian dwelling in places other than camps is a typical feature of most modern conflicts, especially in Africa, where armed struggle is associated with massive movements of people fleeing insecure areas where armed factions attack or raid villages. Only in the initial stage of the Liberian conflict in early 1990s, 59 % of the country's population of 2.6 million was displaced in refugee and IDP camps (Colin Scott, "Liberia," in Roberta Cohen and Francis M. Deng (eds.), *The Forsaken People* (Brookings Institution Press: Washington, DC, July 1998), p. 113). As to the demographics of camps, according to the UNHCR, children represent about 57 percent of all refugee camp inhabitants in Africa. Thus, congregated in identifiable locations, children make an easy target as recruits. While some studies note that camps receive humanitarian assistance from international organizations – providing belligerents with resources worth looting – they do not admit that aid also adds to the incentives to raid camps for children. On the issue of attractiveness of humanitarian assistance and looting see Stephen John Stedman and Fred Tanner (eds.), *Refugee Manipulation: War, Politics, and the Abuse of Human Suffering* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 2003). For a study on food aid delivery and protection see Bill Frelick, "Assistance without Protection: Feed the Hungry, Clothe the Naked, and Watch Them Die," *Worldwide Refugee Information,* 1997).

[262] Jean-Francois Durieux, "Preserving the Civilian Character of Refugee Camps: Lessons from the Kigoma Refugee Programme in Tanzania," *Refugees, Conflict & Conflict Resolution, Track Two*, Vol. 9, No. 3, Nov. 2000 (no pages in online version). Manipulation is described by the cited source as "psychological and physical pressure from anyone in a position of authority particularly from fellow refugees, who capitalise on the refugees' instinctive reaction of "sticking together" in the face of adversity and alienation."

[263] As the study mentioned above describes the life of youth in refugee camps of Tanzania: "The better years of their youth are irremediably wasted. Frustration builds up, leading to alcoholism, sexual and domestic violence, and, for some, a willingness to take up arms. The armed struggle is not only an outlet for their anger, it is also, in their eyes, the only way they can influence the course of their own destiny" (Durieux, "Preserving the Civilian Character of Refugee Camps."

[264] In 2002, "Liberian government had restricted aid agencies to the greater Monrovia area, while blocking IDPs from entering the capital, thus denying the agencies any contact with the vast majority of displaced persons"

Preliminary Evidence. The existing evidence largely supports the above statements.[265] For example, recruitment of Sierra Leonean children from refugee camps in Guinea to join "the Kamajors, the militia organization collaborating with the Sierra Leone Army (SLA)," was documented in 1997.[266] All parties to the Burundian civil war have often reportedly recruited children from refugee and regroupment camps.[267] Furthermore, in the late 1980s and 1990s, for example, a number of Sudanese refugees were recruited into the Ugandan LRA and the West Nile Bank Front (WNBF).[268] The LRA reportedly abducted between 6,000 and 8,000 IDP children in Gulu and Kitgum region between 1993 and 1998.[269] IDPs were extensively recruited in Liberian conflict by all parties.[270]

My prior cross-sectional coauthored work demonstrated the existence of a positive relationship between access to refugee and IDP camps by recruiters and ratios of child soldiers in African intrastate conflicts.[271] My other coauthored study mentioned above confirmed that the presence of refugee camps in some of the 690 sub-national regions of 52 African countries in the period 1990–2004 significantly increased the likelihood of child soldier recruitment, with the people displacement factor being more robust than either absolute or relative poverty.[272]

In order to assess the extent of the role that refugee and IDP camps play in the recruitment of children, however, one should also examine the *survey* data on the percentage of children recruited from the camps as opposed to villages and towns. Note in this regard how one NGO report specified the problem in the Liberian context: "while children living in internally displaced people's camps have been particularly vulnerable to forced recruitment, many children were also abducted from the street, market places, their homes or schools."[273] This observation is supported by the numbers from my survey, which found that the maximum of only 10% of all child soldiers were recruited in refugee and IDP camps. Also, quite interestingly, almost nobody (only five respondents out of over 200 informants in my survey)

(Norwegian Refugee Council, "Profile of Internal Displacement: Liberia," cited in Achvarina and Reich, "No Place to Hide," p. 158).

[265] The following is by no means the exhaustive list of all recorded instances of recruitment of children in camps. Moreover, even the reported cases might not represent the real scope of the problem. According to the UNICEF, "slow registration processes at camps can result in recruitment that is never documented at all, as IDPs and refugees disappear without record" (Jean-Claude Legrand, *Lessons Learned from UNICEF Field Programmes for the Prevention of Recruitment, Demobilization and Reintegration of Child Soldiers,* UNICEF, 1999 cited in Alfredson, "Child soldiers, displacement and human security."

[266] International Labor Organization, *Worst Forms of Child Labor*, ILO Report, citing 1997 report by the Women's Commission for Refugees.

[267] CSUCS, *Child Soldiers 1379 Report*, p. 20.

[268] Zachary Lomo, Angela Naggaga and Lucy Hovil, "The Phenomenon of Forced Migration in Uganda: An Overview of Policy and Practice in a Historical Context," Refugee Law Project, Working Paper No. 1, 2001, p. 4.

[269] Lomo et. al., "The Phenomenon of Forced Migration in Uganda," p. 6.

[270] The detailed analysis of such recruitment is provided in Achvarina and Reich, "No Place to Hide," pp. 154-162.

[271] Achvarina and Reich, "No Place to Hide," p. 148.

[272] Achvarina et. al., "Regional Poverty and Child Soldier Recruitment," pp. 17, 19-20.

[273] Amnesty International, "The Promises of Peace for 21,000 Child Soldiers."

answered positively the question about the preference of armed groups to attack displacement settlements as opposed to villages and towns. Besides my own survey, I am not aware of any other study that assessed a distribution of respondents by the place of recruitment.

Overall, the cross-sectional and case study tests largely support the displacement argument. At the same time, my survey evidence from Liberian context has not confirmed the crucial role of the place of recruitment in relation to refugee and IDP camps. Therefore, the importance of the displacement factor needs to be further verified. Hence I incorporate the logic of this argument into my own explanatory framework, but in a slightly different setting that fits my overarching argumentation structure, as I describe in the next chapter.

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As I show above, the existing vulnerability factor of *small arms* withstands neither simple tests of logic nor the empirical testing on several alternative datasets. The technological innovations in a weapons' weight have affected the entire world equally after small arms became available in every corner of the world including the least developed countries. Child soldier ratios, however, vary across the countries and armed groups. As to the *displacement* factor, I would argue that the factor of *territorial access* in my argument is superior because it represents a broader concept and, as such, encompasses the effect of unprotected displacement while including the effects of other important geographic characteristics of rebel movements. More specifically, I argue that access of rebels to refugee and IDP camps is one of a group's overall ability to reach its potential recruits. This supply pool is especially important when the armed movement is unpopular and civilians tend to flee any potential encounters with rebels. A more detailed discussion on this is to be presented in Chapter 3 on the theoretical framework.

Section 3. Conflict, Group and Child Characteristics: Why do armed groups need children?

The literature that specifies the demand of armed groups for child recruits is scarce and mostly non-empirical. There are two major types of factors offered by the existing studies as explanations behind the armed group's need for child soldiers: 1) the ones that relate to the conflict dynamics, such as conflict duration and conflict timing; and 2) the ones that relate to certain qualities of children that make them attractive candidates for recruitment by insurgents from the military strategy point of view. Below I review these two types of factors.

Conflict Dynamics Factors

1. Conflict duration

There is a popular belief in the literature that as conflicts ensue, the recruitment of minors intensifies. This 'conflict duration' argument claims that "the longer conflicts last, the greater the risk of recruiting

soldiers that are younger and younger."[274] "Indeed, the "stock" of adult men diminishes and there is a need to dig into the "reserves" that are available and abundant."[275] "Thus, even if children under 18 are not specifically sought after by the military, recruiters will have a tendency to bend procedures to recruit minors, when the opportunity arises, in order to swell their ranks."[276]

Logic of Argument. The logic of the conflict duration argument rests on the notion that shortages of manpower are exacerbated towards the end of the conflict due to battle related and civilian casualties, famine and other consequences of war devastation. However, conflict casualties actually vary greatly across conflicts and over time and are not merely subject to the duration of conflict. Consider that "six years of fighting in the jungles of eastern Congo killed nearly 100,000 people, while forty years of violence in Colombia has resulted in less than 20,000 deaths. While 2001 brought the deaths of 643 civilians in the Nepalese civil war, 4,647 perished in the following year."[277] As these examples demonstrate, some protracted conflicts may therefore have only a small number of casualties. In a sense, this particular logic of the duration argument when expressed in the number of battle deaths is more relevant to the factor of *conflict intensity*, which is more likely to suggest the scope of war casualties.

Conflict duration, however, might still play a role in explaining child recruitment due to its other potential consequences. For example, there is a possibility that the willingness of adults to fight diminishes over time, as people get tired of fighting or they flee the conflict zone. The end of the armed struggle might correlate with more intensive child soldier recruitment for two other reasons. First, the later stage of a conflict is arguably the time for most active negotiations involving belligerent parties and international actors, when sizes of armed forces, as well as territories under control, are often associated with the bargaining power at such talks. The sudden demand for boosting forces with additional bodies may therefore result in child soldier recruitment. Second, the recruitment of children has been reported to precede the DDR programs at the end of conflicts with the goal of armed groups' leaders to take the money packages from those 'puppet' soldiers recruited solely for subsequent cash exchange.

Preliminary Evidence. The existing empirical evidence offers mixed findings for the relationship between conflict duration and child soldiering. Thus, the case evidence suggests that there is no single stage of conflict, including the end of armed struggle, when child soldier recruitment should be expected to occur. Consider that the average recruitment age of the members of RENAMO in Mozambique fell

[274] ILO, *Wounded Childhood,* p. 25. In Andvig and Gates's paper conflict duration was also said to increase the demand for child soldiers by armed groups (Andvig and Gates, "Recruiting Children for Armed Conflict," p. 16).
[275] Ibid., pp. 25-26.
[276] Ibid., p. 26.
[277] Examples are taken from Macartan Humpreys and Jeremy Weinstein, "Handling and Manhandling Civilians in Civil War," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 100, No. 3, August 2006, p. 429, who cite the numbers from Bethany Lacina and Nils Petter Gleditsch, "Monitoring Trends in Global Combat: A New Dataset of Battle Deaths," *European Journal of Population* 21 (June), 2005, pp. 145–66 and INSEC, *Human Rights Yearbook* (Kathmandu, Nepal: INSEC, 2005).

from twenty-five in 1978 to seventeen (16.93) years in 1987, suggesting an increasing trend in child recruitment towards the end of the war, as the argument in question suggests.[278] At the same time, however, the average age of recruitment in some Liberian factions, on the contrary, was rising, signifying a higher tendency to recruit children in the initial stages of the conflict.[279] There were other conflicts besides the Liberian one that started with armies of rebels already filled with young recruits, as was the case in Burundi, the DRC and Sierra Leone.[280] After examining child soldier rates and conflict duration in the sample of 19 African conflicts, my coauthored work established no support for the conflict duration claim in that context.[281] However, a subsequent coauthored study of mine uncovered a relationship between child recruitment and the years of armed struggle in 296 conflict regions of 28 African countries.[282] With the present ambiguity about the role of conflict duration, I include this variable as a control into my large-*N* analysis.

2. Time of Conflict

There is a claim in the literature that "wars where children have become active soldiers now typify the wars of today."[283] History, nevertheless, offers numerous examples of child participation in civil and other wars of the past, from ancient through medieval times to Napoleonic Wars, the American Civil War and the Second World War.[284] After all, the word *infantry* originates from *infanteria* – a collective of *infantes* (literally "child") or "young soldiers who followed knights into battle on foot."[285] At the same

[278] Hillary Andersson, *Mozambique: The War Against the People* (London: Macmillan, 1992), pp. 59-60, cited in Helen Brocklehurst, *Who is Afraid of Children? Children, Conflict, and International Relations* (Alershot: Ashgat, 2006), p. 118.
[279] This tendency was observed in the data from my survey of ex-Liberian child soldiers. More specifically, the number of informants recruited in each year was decreasing with time.
[280] For these examples refer to the introduction of this dissertation in Chapter 1, p. 24.
[281] Achvarina and Reich, "No Place to Hide," p. 143.
[282] Achvarina et. al., "Regional Poverty and Child Soldier Recruitment," p. 18. It should be noted here that we also found that "the number of years of conflict does not have a significant relationship with recruitment risk when *conflict intensity* (battle deaths) is accounted for." In other words, the presence of high correlation between *conflict duration* and *conflict intensity* (correlation coefficient of 0.85) suggests that *conflict duration* affects child soldiering through the causal logic of increased demand due to high losses in personnel experienced by armed groups.
[283] Andvig and Gates, "Recruiting Children for Armed Conflict," p. 5.
[284] The youths of Sparta in the first millennium BC are probably the first known historical example of child participation in combat. Later during the Middle Ages in Europe thirteen years old "upper-class boys who hoped to become knights served as squires" while apprenticing for the adult knights (Alcinda Honwana, *Child Soldiers in Africa,* pp. 26-27). Among the duties of older squires was to protect the knight in combat. The so-called Children's Crusades of 1212 "included thousands of boys and girls between the ages of ten and eighteen who joined together believing that God would deliver Jerusalem into their hands" (Ibid., p. 27). The Napoleon's army also recruited boys as young as twelve from the common classes. The British Navy under Nelson "included many naval cadets and midshipmen of fifteen, as well as younger cabin boys" (Ibid., p. 27). During World War I, "some 250,000 underage teenagers enlisted in the British Army, of whom 50% were killed or wounded" (Shamsur Rabb Khan, "Children as Victims of War," *Financial Express*, August 25, 2006). The Second World War witnessed "the generation of German children who belonged to Hitler Youth" and youth mobilization for the Jewish movement (for detailed analysis of the latter see Rosen, *Armies of the Young*).
[285] Honwana, *Child Soldiers in Africa*, p. 26.

time, what might indeed be true is the fact that the past child soldier practice was not as widespread as in modern conflicts. Whether or not the practice of child recruitment increased over time, there is no agreement in the literature on child soldiers about what might cause the escalating effect. As has been mentioned above, Singer links this time dimension of child recruitment to the recent spread of small arms and the advancement in technology.[286] That argument, however, was refuted in the previous section. Honwana offers a different argument suggesting that child soldering practice spread across the African continent as a proven effective military strategy.[287] Similar to the small arms argument, however, the latter explanation also does not withstand closer scrutiny.

For Honwana's argument to hold, one should expect that conflicts neighboring each other should both have child soldiers. Nevertheless, this is not the case. For example, in early 1990s, none of the active insurgencies in Chad was reported to recruit children. Meanwhile, the SPLA faction in Chad's neighboring Sudan was widely recruiting children at that time. Moreover, as evidence suggests, even two armed groups operating in the same country might not necessarily both employ the practice or the degree to which they do may vary considerably in the scope of child recruitment. As has been mentioned earlier, Congolese armed groups of late 1990s, with varying child recruitment practice, can serve as such an example.[288] Overall, there is a lack of robust theoretical support for the logic of the conflict timing argument. Therefore, I do not view it as a crucial explanation for child soldier recruitment.

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In my argument, the interpretation of attributes of the conflicts themselves is reduced to the level of their effects on the characteristics of armed groups relevant for child recruitment. Therefore, having armed groups as the level of analysis in my work, any specific attributes of conflicts matter only to the extent to which they shape the characteristics of the actors involved in them. Thus, certain conflict features discussed in this section, such as *conflict duration* and *timing* do not enter themselves into my argument, but they do shape certain characteristics of armed groups, which, in turn, affect child soldiering, as I propose. Since none of these conflict attributes has an effect on my variables of armed group's *fighting capacity* or *material capacity*, as I show later, I believe that the inclusion of armed groups' as opposed to a conflict's attributes into my argument represents a superior and more precise strategy in assessing the level of child recruitment across non-state armed actors.

As I explain in the third chapter, there is one potential methodological reason for directly including the *conflict duration* factor into my empirical testing as a control variable. This is because an armed

[286] Singer, *Children at War*, p. 38.
[287] Ibid.
[288] In Congo-Brazzaville, armed groups such as United Democratic Forces (FDU), Cocoes and Ntsiloulous were not found to be recruiting child soldiers during their existence in late 1990s, whereas the Ninjas were reported to engage in the practice quite actively.

group's characteristic of *material capacity* is potentially not invariant over time. In other words, an armed group's ability to pay its combatants might change over time. Therefore, I include the variable of *conflict duration* into the analysis as a control variable. This treatment of the groups' longevity helps alleviate a potential endogeneity problem caused by omitted variable bias. Otherwise, I do not postulate that, in theory, conflict duration should in itself directly affect child soldier recruitment rates.

I also argue that even if *conflict timing* correlates with the increased child soldier recruitment in the modern world, as such, it does not explain why this trend is occurring. The change over time that one might observe is, in the end, arguably the result of a change in certain crucial characteristics of armed groups. In the next chapter I demonstrate that, in fact, all four of my independent variables (*fighting capacity*, *material capacity, ethnic persecution* and *territorial access*) were found to increase in their values over time.[289] I therefore include the variable of *conflict timing* into my analysis as a control variable to account for conflict epoch and avoid the potential endogeneity problem.[290] Otherwise, I do not include this factor into my argument as an explanation for the child soldier phenomenon.

Characteristics of children

The literature on child soldiers in general assumes that children are substitutable for adults in the context of armed struggle. Moreover, as evident from accounts below, it is often alleged that underage warriors are actually "better fighters" than adults. What specific qualities do children possess in this regard? Anecdotal evidence depicts them as more obedient and loyal, braver, and cheaper to maintain – the characteristics essential for making them effective in military strategy: "They're cheap, malleable, they obey orders and they don't have the same fears as adults," according to an emergency child protection specialist who worked in Liberia.[291] One Congolese rebel officer summarized "why children make very good soldiers" in the following words: "they obey orders; they are not concerned with getting back to their wife and family; and they don't know fear."[292] In addition, children might possess certain features that make it easier for potential recruiters to convince them to join, such as gullibility to propaganda and indoctrination.[293]

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[289] For example, the mean value for the variable of *fighting capacity* for armed groups that operated after 1997 was 0.49 – an increase by 20% from the mean of 0.41 for groups that ceased to exist prior to 1997. Similarly, the mean values of the variable *territory control* by unpopular groups rose from 0.71 to 0.91. *Ethnic persecution* values also increased in case of popular groups from the mean of 0.24 to 0.48 for pre-1997 and post-1997 groups respectively. The variable of *material compensation* also increased over time, from 0.66 to 0.85.

[290] For further discussion on potential endogeneity problem refer to the empirical results of this dissertation in Chapter 5.

[291] International Rescue Commission (IRC) worker cited in Esther Pan, "Liberia: Child Soldiers," Council on Foreign Relations, *Backgrounder*, August 29, 2003.

[292] Account from "Children Under Arms," *The Economist*, July 10, 1999, pp. 21-23, at p. 22, cited in Andvig and Gates, "Recruiting Children for Armed Conflict," p. 2.

[293] Survey research on LRA abducted youth from Northern Uganda revealed higher levels of indoctrination among younger soldiers of the faction who were most gullible to the spiritual training, and to a lesser extent to

These characteristics of children have been confirmed in the literature on child labor and child psychology in peacetime, and by survey research in the context of armed conflict. Andvig and Gates identified some experimental evidence from the psychology literature on minors in peacetime revealing that "children more tightly bond to a group" and "may 'forget' quicker that they were recruited by force."[294] The survey-based study of Chris Blattman claims that young adolescents possess a unique combination of military effectiveness and ease of retention, thus yielding "the largest expected net gain to the rebel leader."[295] Besides his finding on higher allegiance rates to the rebel organization among younger LRA abductees, Blattman also demonstrated that familiarity with the location of escape from the armed group improved with age, "with young adults nearly 20 percentage points more likely to know their location at the time of escape compared to young children."[296] Blattman's study therefore provides ample evidence for the ease of child indoctrination and geographical disorientation.

In many other contexts but the Ugandan one, recruiters also mentioned that children are "competent," and "more effective for difficult and delicate missions like laying mines, acting as scouts or intelligence agents."[297] After all, children might possess enough physical strength for the necessary military tasks. In a comparable child labor context, they are said to be able to perform adult work from a certain age and "from an economic point of view" can be regarded as "substitutes for adults."[298] At the same time, however, other examples like the one below raise certain doubts about the proclaimed military effectiveness of children. Consider that there were reported directives issued by some rebel groups "to

misinformation, strategic use of fear and violence (Blattman, "Causes of Child Soldiering," p. 18). Blattman also points out that "the root causes of effectiveness and ease of indoctrination and disorientation (in particular, why they vary by age) remain unidentified. Physical strength, agility, mental composure, self-discipline, material circumstances, and outside social support may all play a role. The evidence is suggestive on these matters, but far from conclusive. It is especially silent on the internal psychology of the recruit" (Ibid., p. 25).

[294] Andvig and Gates, "Recruiting Children for Armed Conflict," p. 8. Here Andvig and Gates refer to the linear public goods experiment reported in William Harbaugh, Kate Krause and Lise Vesterlund, "Risk Attitudes of Children and Adults: Choices Over Small and Large Probability Gains and Losses," University of Oregon Department of Economics Working Papers, 2001. "In this case children like adults start out by being more generous than one would predict on the basis of pure rational choice models. Age has no influence here. But unlike adults, children's voluntary contributions do not decline and even increase with the number of repetitions. Group attachment has an increasing effect. If we by a leap of faith allow the transfer of this result to child soldier situations, we may not expect children to have a stronger tendency to run away than adults" (Andvig and Gates, "Recruiting Children for Armed Conflict," p. 4).

[295] Blattman, "The Causes of Child Soldiering," p. 2.

[296] Blattman, "The Causes of Child Soldiering," pp. 2, 17. "A linear approximation of the relationship, including controls, suggests that an abductee is 1.2 percentage points more likely to know his location for every year of age." Ease of disorientation of young recruits, suggested by empirical findings of Blattman's work, might not apply in all conflict contexts, however. Thus, rebels often operate in larger cities or in well established geographical places known to children equally well as to adults. The latter is especially common when armed groups control a certain amount of the country's territory, as opposed to hiding in the forests as the LRA did, for instance.

[297] ILO, *Wounded Childhood*, p. 26.

[298] Andvig and Gates, "Recruiting Children for Armed Conflict," p. 2.

limit the use of children in conflict as they are less reliable than adults."[299] In addition, there might be armed groups which rely more on heavy weapons and professional intelligence, as opposed to infantry, guerrilla warfare or spying, with the former roles being performed much better by adults, rather than children. In the same spirit, Andvig and Gates suggest that for armed groups in a situation of excess supply of volunteers, "we should expect recruitment to be more selective" with "ideological, ethnic and religious criteria" being imposed "in addition to a soldier's ability to engage in violent activity."[300] Under such circumstances, it can be argued that "children are likely to be viewed as second-best labor and fewer of them will be recruited."[301]

In their theoretical study, Andvig and Gates found that general "myths" from practitioners' literature about child obedience, fearlessness, and cheap cost of maintenance do make sense from the perspective of child psychology and child labor studies.[302] The myth of *obedience* is the most circulated one. As recruitment agents from the DRC commented themselves, children are docile, have a tendency to obey orders, and can be manipulated.[303] This may be because "children, who are eager to please and may not have developed a sense of right and wrong yet, are relatively easy to condition into obedient killing machines."[304] According to Andvig and Gates, children may "respond better to punishment than adults" and "they are more used to getting publicly admonished and taking orders without question."[305]

The myth of *fearlessness* emerges from the NGO and IO accounts, some of them interview-based. For example, in Sierra Leone, an observer claimed that "one of the reasons for the higher casualty rate of children was the children's 'fearlessness.'"[306] According to recruiters from the DRC and Burundi, "children are daring because they are unaware of death" and "they are tough and dynamic."[307] Andvig and Gates suggest that characteristic of fearlessness could be potentially attributed to the lower risk avoidance of children compared to adults. Thus, the experimental observations in child psychology

[299] Guillaume Landry, "Child Soldiers and Disarmament, Demobilisation, Rehabilitation and Reintegration in West Africa: A Survey of Programmatic Work on Child Soldiers in Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea," 15 December 2005.
[300] Andvig and Gates, "Recruiting Children for Armed Conflict," p. 15.
[301] Ibid., p. 15.
[302] "Given the lack of concrete evidence from child soldiers, we juxtapose casual observations of child soldiers' behavior with experimental evidence of children in the United States in quiet, peaceful conditions" (Andvig and Gates, "Recruiting Children for Armed Conflict," p. 3).
[303] ILO, *Wounded Childhood*, p. 26.
[304] IRC worker cited in Pan, "Liberia: Child Soldiers."
[305] Andvig and Gates, "Recruiting Children for Armed Conflict," p. 7.
[306] Amnesty International, "Sierra Leone: Childhood the Casualty of Conflict," 2000, p. 2, cited in Andvig and Gates, "Recruiting Children for Armed Conflict," p. 3.
[307] ILO, *Wounded Childhood*, p. 26.

literature attest to the fact that "children underestimate low probability risks when associated with losses, even if the risk of loss is fairly high."[308]

To these reasons behind child fearlessness one might add the consequence of the established relationship between age and exposure to superstitious beliefs. In my survey of Liberian child soldiers, almost all respondents reported believing in a so-called 'protection medicine' conferred on them by a ritual of the traditional societies' leaders to which commanders of Liberian factions took their recruits. Thus, 'protection medicine,' according to my informants, made them immune to bullets and knives and helped avoid wounds, injuries, and death. This belief, indeed, contributed to the fearlessness of children who walked directly into the midst of battles being certain of the protective force of the 'medicine.' Interestingly, I did not find such an overwhelming belief in the power of 'protection medicine' among former adult combatants. The accounts of Liberian child soldiers are similar to the stories of Ugandan youth introduced by the LRA leaders to the sacred protective qualities of holy water and magic stones.[309]

The potential ease of keeping children from sharing the loot and their higher propensity to act on promises of future benefits indeed makes them *cheaper* for organizations to maintain. Armed groups vary in their practices of handing out payments to young recruits. While some of them do, as the examples of Colombia and Uganda cited earlier demonstrate, most of them do not. According to the ILO study, 94% of the interviewed young soldiers "had received no remuneration from the group for which they worked."[310] According to my interviews with Liberians, some armed groups in that country who actually offered material incentives to their recruits had a different going rate for adults and children, with the latter being substantially lower.[311] However, the overall price of child recruitment should reflect all other costs that this strategy might incur, such as the decline in domestic approval of the group by local populations and subsequent potential reduction of logistic and membership support.

Another important characteristic of children cited in the literature is their susceptibility to propaganda and indoctrination which makes them easier targets for rebels looking for recruits. Religion, ideology, community and family values all play a role here. However, without any proper comparison we do not know how much more gullible children are relative to adults. Consider, for example, the descriptive profile of former Liberian adult combatants, who reported being "disillusioned" after the war for falling into the misleading and unfulfilled promises of the military factions' leaders.[312] Indeed, all idealistic and

[308] Andvig and Gates, "Recruiting Children for Armed Conflict," p. 4, citing Harbaugh et al., "Risk Attitudes of Children and Adults."
[309] Briggs, *Innocents Lost*, pp. 122-23.
[310] ILO, *Wounded Childhood*, p. 26.
[311] The MODEL armed group, according to one informant, was offering $150 to adults and $75 to children during its recruitment rallies.
[312] From the profile of a typical Liberian adult combatant compiled by Dr. Edward Snoch Grant, a Liberian practicing psychiatrist, cited in Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, pp. 127-28.

revolutionary movements are based on propaganda and yet history is not short of examples when such a strategy greatly succeeded in attracting very large numbers of deeply committed adult recruits.

Overall, with some degree of doubt, most of the characteristics of children reviewed here make them useful for armed groups. With their unconfirmed but possible good military effectiveness, "children may in a technical sense substitute for adults to a degree that is surprising given Western attitudes to and expectations about childhood."[313] At the same time, the characteristics of age are universal across countries and conflicts, making children equally "valuable" for all armed groups. And yet, puzzlingly, some armed groups take advantage of these "good fighters" by recruiting children whereas others do not.

In my theoretical framework I assume that all these characteristics make children relatively good substitutes for adult combatants. These characteristics in themselves cannot explain the variance across different armed groups. However, on the basis of the relative substitutability assumption I can hypothesize about the factors that actually do explain this variance. It is possible that some groups actually do not believe that children are good fighters, or rather it is more likely that they simply face a different degree of demand for underage soldiers or combatants in general, as well as different constraints in their capability to recruit minors. It is these demands and constraints that I explore systematically in my dissertation and review in detail in the following Chapter 3.

Summary

Despite the recent calls in the child soldier literature for testing the existing anecdotal evidence behind the recruitment of minors, there are only few empirical studies on the subject, and the state of the art remains largely populated with non-systematic, interview-based reports and books. But even among these existing works there is none that attempts to answer my research question about why some armed groups recruit children and others do not.

My review of the most cited literature on child soldiers that focused on the ***reasons behind a child decision to enlist*** into armed groups revealed mostly mixed or insufficient evidence to either support or contest the existing claims convincingly. Thus, the *poverty* argument was found to have mixed evidence in the studies that do and do not offer support for this otherwise logically sound claim. The *orphaning* argument, albeit tested in some studies, lacks a proper methodological examination in order to make conclusive generalizations. As to the *lack of education and unemployment* argument, I refute this factor on theoretical grounds. I also show that all other marginal factors in the literature explaining child agency to join – such as *collapse of societal structures, militarization of daily life, feelings of helplessness and vulnerability and desire to revenge, proximity to a conflict zone, peer pressure or identity formation* – cannot constitute crucial explanations because they have very low variance across cases, especially in the context of armed struggle.

[313] Andvig and Gates, "Recruiting Children for Armed Conflict," p. 5.

My evaluation of the studies that attempted to answer the question of ***what makes children vulnerable for recruitment*** concluded that the *small arms* argument, for example, cannot explain the variation of child soldier recruitment across armed groups. The *unprotected displacement* claim, at the same time, could potentially become an explanatory factor, but due to the mixed evidence cited above its effects are not well established. The existing studies reflecting on ***why armed groups need children*** neither provide empirical evidence, nor withstand additional scrutiny. Thus, the logic behind the structural factors of *conflict duration* and *conflict timing* was refuted on the basis of evidence and theoretical arguments. The *characteristics of children* that were proposed in the literature as potential explanations for child soldier recruitment appear very important for understanding the possibility of the phenomenon occurrence, but, unfortunately, cannot be viewed as crucial explanatory factors as they are universal to all children in the world and cannot vary much (if at all) across groups of children or countries and conflicts.

The factors pertinent to the actual characteristics of armed groups which might explain the varying need across military organizations to recruit children or different constraints that they face in resorting to this practice are strikingly absent from the literature on child soldiering. This, in combination with the lack of empirical studies to test the existing explanatory factors that focus on recruits rather than recruiters, represents the biggest gap in the literature on child soldiering that needs to be addressed. I therefore focus in my work on the identification of potential explanations behind rebels' varying demand for underage warriors, their process of decision making to resort to child recruitment, and constraints that they face in implementing it. In the next chapter I will show how existing theoretical approaches that attempt to model child recruitment from an armed group's perspective omit important parts of the rebel's decision making process and certain explanatory factors as a result, as well as generate propositions that are not amenable to empirical testing. In proposing my own unique explanatory framework of varying child recruitment practices by armed groups, I contribute to the existing literature by extending the methodology of child recruitment analysis in modeling jointly the rebels' and children's motives, unlike much of the previous literature which treats these aspects separately, if at all. In addition, I present the largely missing empirical tests of my new claims, as well as some of the existing conjectures.

Chapter 3: Explanatory Framework

In this chapter I present my explanatory framework of recruitment of children by armed groups. I first outline in Section 1 the child soldier recruitment model from the point of view of armed groups' demand for adult and underage warriors, as well as availability of children for enlistment and conscription. On the basis of this model, I offer four hypotheses as the answers to the question of why some armed groups recruit children whereas others do not. I then extend my model by introducing in Section 2 the conditioning variable of *groups' popularity* which differentiates the strength of the explanatory power of the proposed four explanations for popular and unpopular armed groups. After describing my own explanatory framework, I contrast it in Section 3 with the existing theoretical approaches by other researchers who model the issue of child soldier recruitment. I show how my own explanatory framework builds on the existing efforts and where and how it departs from them as I offer an original design for empirical analysis and testing, as well as data evidence. At the end of this chapter, in Section 4, I introduce some other alternative explanations from the existing literature which I believe have some theoretical and empirical justification to enter my model as control variables.

Section 1. Child Recruitment from the Perspective of Armed Groups and Children

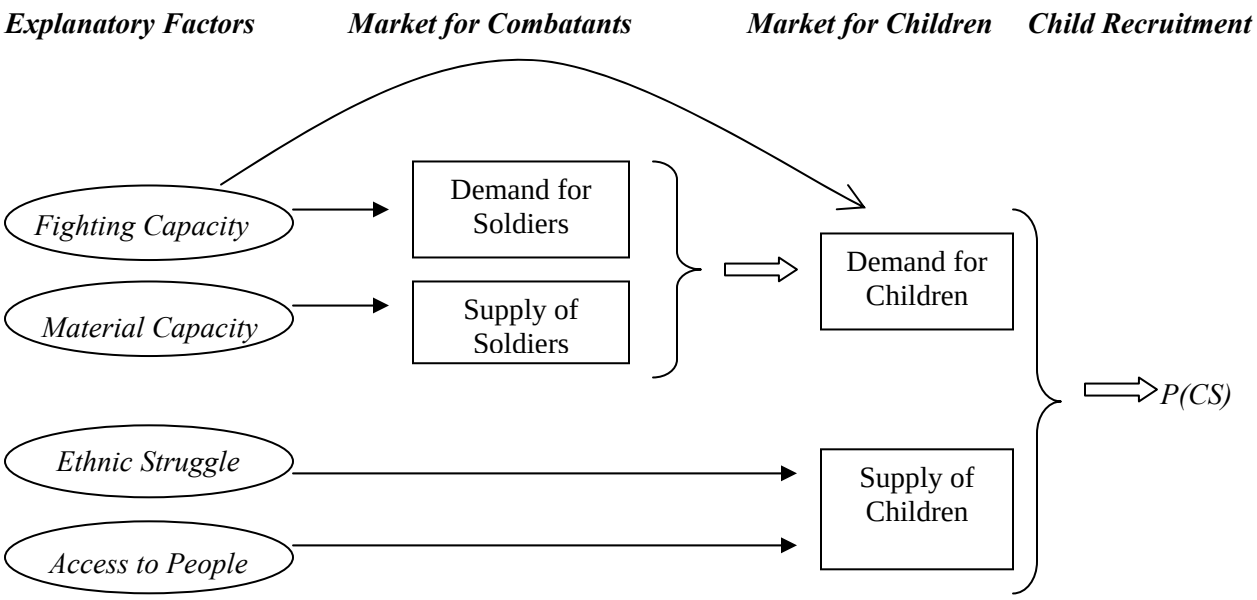
Where does the need of an armed group to recruit children come from? In order to model insurgencies and explain their behavior with regard to the use of child soldiers, I treat underage recruitment as a subset of the broader issue of mobilization of people for conflict.[314] Understanding 1) when armed groups might need additional combatants, and 2) whether this demand for combatants transfers into the demand for child soldiers specifically, as well as 3) whether rebels are capable of reaching children – is a potentially useful way of thinking about the problem of underage recruitment. Consider, for example, that no matter how desperately some Chechen children wanted to fight on the side of "boeviki" against the Russian army, the run-away minors were returned to their communities by the rebel leaders – whether the result of low demand for additional combatants or some normative restriction established by commanders on their units.[315] Alternatively, an armed group that is desperate to fill its ranks with children might not necessarily find underage conscripts to be readily available for recruitment, as their willingness to join a faction or the degree of vulnerability to a forced conscription can vary depending on many factors. Thus, the explanatory model of underage recruitment, I argue, should involve the interaction of supply and demand factors behind child soldiering, where both contextual variables and rebel characteristics can be

[314] Andvig and Gates also note that the assumption of substitutability of adults for children makes the understanding of the "nature of the market for soldiers in general" desirable in order to explain the phenomenon of child soldiers (Andvig and Gates, "Recruiting Children for Armed Conflict," p. 17).

[315] My written correspondence with the Amnesty International in Moscow, 2004. It should be noted, though, that Chechen boeviks were reported to sometimes use children as suicide bombers (Khassan Baiev, *The Oath: A Surgeon Under Fire* (London, UK: Simon and Schuster, 2003), p. 163). Overall, however, child soldiering did not seem to be a widespread practice among Chechen boeviks, but rather an occasional instance.

the driving forces of insurgents' intent and ability to recruit children.[316] Figure 1 summarizes my explanatory framework based on the supply and demand factors determining the probability of child soldier recruitment, *P(CS)*. The figure also shows how my proposed factors enter the explanatory framework by offering a visual depiction of the outcome of the causal chains between the independent variables of *fighting capacity*, *material capacity*, *ethnic struggle* and *access to people*, and the dependent variable of the probability of *child soldier recruitment*, each of which I describe below in more detail.

Figure 1. Model of Prediction of Child Soldier Recruitment by Armed Groups



Demand for Combatants

Intensity of Armed Struggle. The ultimate need for additional combatants by an armed group should first and foremost be a function of some factor related to the nature of armed conflict. In the situations of intense fighting, I argue, one may expect high battle related casualties and exigent need for additional numbers of soldiers to tip over the balance of forces and replace the dead combatants alike. In addition, in conflicts of high intensity the supply of adults diminishes for many reasons. It is a wide scale conflict which, on the one hand, requires large numbers of foot soldiers to perform intense military operations and maintain a necessary level of fighting, and, on the other hand, leads to numerous battle deaths and civilian casualties alike. Therefore, the intense fighting generates both the higher demand for additional

[316] This approach corresponds with the following insight of Andvig and Gates: "To best understand why there are so many children participating in some military organizations and few or none in others, we need not only look at demand and supply in isolation, but to see how supply and demand mesh" (Andvig and Gates, "Recruiting Children for Armed Conflict," p. 14).

combatants and pressure on the supply of adult fighters, which, in turn, generates demand for children. Similarly, the voluntary supply of children in the situations of intense fighting can intensify.[317]

With the conceivable link between conflict intensity and intensified mobilization campaign pursued by all parties to the conflict, as well as between conflict intensity and combat casualties, the causal chain leading from conflict intensity to depletion of adult manpower in the country is not so obvious and deserves some more attention. It is quite possible that the numbers of adults available for recruitment in the country diminish 1) with the increased mobilization of people; 2) with the decreased will of adults to join the riskier and more dangerous intense fighting; 3) with higher death tolls of adult combatants and civilians; as well as 4) the latter's flight from the country as refugees in the face of insecure environments that high conflict intensity generates.

As more and more adults get recruited, both their absolute numbers and their will to participate in armed hostilities, especially the more intense ones with higher risk of getting killed, might be fading away. High civilian combat casualties that typify many modern conflicts of today reduce the absolute numbers of potential adult recruits even further. Consider in this regard that civilians nowadays represent 90 percent of the war casualties, compared to 5 percent in the First World War and 48 per cent in the Second World War.[318] With such a rate, for example, civil wars since 1945 claimed from 16 to 25 million of civilian lives.[319] As to specific countries, in Angola, for example, about 10 percent of the population "was killed by civil conflict since independence."[320] Armed violence in the DRC between 1998 and 2001 claimed an estimated 2.5 million lives, or about 5% of the total 50 million population in the country as of 1999.[321] Researchers from the survey project conducted by the ICRC in the country estimate the number

[317] For further discussion and examples of child voluntarism in insecure environments refer to the section below called "Legitimacy and Insecure Environments." Also, different intensity of armed struggle might reflect different degrees of educational and employment structures' disruption, which was said to affect the decisions of some children to join armed groups.

[318] On comparison of civilian casualties through history see 1) "Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict Condemns Attacks on Civilians and Use of Child Soldiers," UN Department of Public Information, HR/4388, 9 November 1998; 2) Simon Chesterman (ed.), *Civilians in War (*Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2001) cited in Macartan Humphreys and Jeremy Weinstein, "Handling and Manhandling Civilians in Civil War: Determinants of the Strategies of Warring Factions," Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Hilton Chicago and the Palmer House Hilton, Chicago, IL, September 2, 2004, p. 2.

[319] Thus, one source reported that the overall death toll in civil wars since 1945 has reached about 16.2 million people, if "not including the countless millions that perished because of starvation and disease induced by war" (Humphreys and Weinstein, "Handling and Manhandling Civilians in Civil War," p. 2). Yet another research project estimated this number to be much higher – over 25 million people (Ruth Sivard, *World Military and Social Expenditures,* 1996 edition, and Stephen M. Saideman*, The Ties That Divide: Ethnic Politics, Foreign Policy, and International. Conflict* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), cited in Ann Hironaka, *Neverending Wars: The International Community, Weak States, and the Perpetuation of Civil War*, Harvard University Press, 2005, p. 2). It is possible that this estimate includes the victims of hunger and diseases resulted from civil strife.

[320] Sivard, *World Military and Social Expenditures,* cited in Hironaka, *Neverending Wars*.

[321] The population estimate offered by the National Information and Communications Infrastructure (NICI) in Africa is 50,335,000 million (NICI, "Country Profiles: Democratic Republic of Congo," URL: http://www.uneca.org/aisi/nici/country_profiles/DRCongo/drcab.htm). By 2007, the amount of war casualties in the

of violent deaths during this period to be at 350,000.[322] According to the Battle Deaths project, about 145,000 of these account for combat casualties, with the latter constituting "only about 6% of the fatalities due to the war."[323] The remaining 2.15 million were all "war-related deaths, primarily driven by disease" and malnutrition.[324] According to Lacina and Gleditsch, "this disparity between battle deaths and war deaths is not unique" to the DRC only and is observed in a number of African countries.[325] All these casualty numbers do not include additional millions that "have become homeless or have fled as refugees."[326] Meanwhile, consider that in only the initial stages of the Liberian conflict, for example, in early 1990s, 59% of the country's population of 2.6 million was displaced in refugee and IDP camps.[327]

Demographers offer mixed support for the possibility of adult manpower availability to be a crucial factor behind child soldiering. Jon Pedersen, for example, suggests that the demographics of a country can never alter to such a degree when there are no adult men available, even in the most violent civil wars in terms of casualties. He notes that "even in the situations with quite skewed age structures due to migration and mortality there is usually a quite sufficient supply of young adults."[328] At the same time, however, he also mentions that a "plentiful supply of young men is not always the case."[329] The example Pedersen brings to stress this point concerns the two and a half million populated Eritrea (at the end of the war), whose 5.9% of male population in their 18-29 years of age "would have been more or less exhausted if they should have filled the 125,000 strong army."[330]

DRC rose to 3.8 million, or 7.6% of the 1999 total population of about 50 million and 6.7% of the 2007 estimates (IRIN, "Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) Humanitarian Country Profile," February 2007, http://www.irinnews.org/country.aspx?CountryCode=CD&RegionCode=GL. "The UN and international NGOs estimate that at least 1,200 Congolese die every day from conflict-related causes: preventable diseases, poverty and gender-based violence" (Ibid.).

[322] Roberts, L., Ngoy, P., Mone, C, Lubula, Ch., Mwezse, L., Zantop, M. and Despines, M., *Mortality in the Democratic Republic of Congo: Results from a Nationwide Survey* (Bukavu/New York: International Rescue Committee: 2003), p. 2.

[323] Lacina and Gleditsch, "Monitoring Trends in Global Combat," p. 159.

[324] Lacina and Gleditsch, "Monitoring Trends in Global Combat," p. 159.

[325] "Although there is great uncertainty associated with these data, they strongly suggest that protracted conflicts in poor countries claim the vast majority of their victims off the battlefield. This is especially dramatic in cases where conflict causes famine, as has occurred in Ethiopia and the Sudan. Although poorly equipped and organised armies may have relatively little capacity to cause large numbers of battle deaths or limited will to engage other combatants, they may still be able to cause high numbers of war deaths" (Lacina and Gleditsch, p. 159).

[326] Hironaka, *Neverending Wars,* p. 2.

[327] Scott, "Liberia," in Cohen and Deng, *The Forsaken People*, p. 113.

[328] Pedersen, "Why Are Child Soldiers Useful?" p. 6.

[329] Ibid., p. 7.

[330] With female population in the same age group constituting 8.4%, the total 18-29 year old population of Eritrea constituted 14.3% in 1995, according to Eritrea Demographic and Health Survey Data (Pedersen, "Why Are Child Soldiers Useful?" p. 7). These percentages sound credible if compared with other data sources reporting on population numbers in Africa. Thus, according to the National Information and Communications Infrastructure (NICI) in Africa, population aged 15-24 constituted 20% of the total population in Eritrea in 1999, whereas population aged 25-60 constituted 26.9% (NICI, "Country Profiles: Eritrea," URL: http://www.uneca.org/aisi/nici/country_profiles/Eritrea/eriab.htm).

Which operationalization of conflict intensity will most closely approximate both the scale of fighting generating the need for additional numbers of fighters and the attrition rates of an armed group? The literature on armed conflict uses two basic indicators to represent conflict intensity: number of armed events and the scope of battle deaths.[331] In my work I refrain from utilizing either of these indicators, though, for the following reasons. Conflict intensity is represented by the *number of armed events* that each actor participated in can be a good proxy for the demand for additional combatants to sustain the fighting. Unfortunately, the existing dataset with the systematic collection and classification of such events is limited only to eight African conflicts and as a result does not offer enough coverage for my large-*N* dataset. At the same time, the number of armed events in which groups participate might not tell us much about attrition rates, as the number of battles does not necessarily correlate with attrition rates if rebels, for example, achieve battle victories against the government relatively efficiently. *Battle deaths*, as yet another operationalization of conflict intensity, would have to be used to complement the *number of armed events* indicator in order to obtain a more comprehensive picture. However, the existing data on battle deaths are also quite limited as the numbers available do not disaggregate between different armed groups in conflicts. Meanwhile, battle deaths often occur disproportionately on one side only, be it government or rebels.[332] In addition, the available battle deaths data lump together civilian and military casualties alike, which also makes it problematic to use in the intended context.[333]

Which alternative operationalization of conflict intensity can then be utilized to represent the demand for combatants by an armed group? I argue that the best indicator would have to reflect if or how often rebels have to engage in fighting for the most challenging military targets, the ultimate one being the capital. These battles for the capital or large regional centers, as well as important military and logistical establishments or bases of the opponent, such as weapons warehouses, airports, or seaports, are usually

[331] The *number of armed events*, including battles, represents a useful way of conceptualizing the conflict intensity, as it seems to be a natural indication of how intense an armed struggle in a particular conflict or for a particular armed group was. For more information on the data on armed events see Clionadh Raleigh, Håvard Hegre, "Introducing ACLED: An Armed Conflict Location and Event Dataset," Paper presented at the conference on 'Disaggregating the Study of Civil War and Transnational Violence', University of California Institute of Global Conflict and Cooperation, San Diego, CA, 7–8 March, 2005. The utility of *battle deaths* in operationalizing and measuring conflict intensity was suggested by Bethany Lacina and Nils Peter Gleditsch, the authors of the Battle Deaths Dataset. Thus, they "believe that battle deaths are the best measure of combat intensity" (Lacina and Gleditsch, "Monitoring Trends in Global Combat," p. 151).

[332] This situation is conceivable if we think, for example, about the Liberian conflict, where at the beginning of the armed contest with rebels the government army was loosing most of its soldiers in Nimba County to the NPFL group which faced almost no losses at all (Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, pp. 77-78, and Bayo Ogunleye, *Behind Rebel Lines: Anatomy of Charles Taylor's Hostage Camps* (Nigeria: Delta Publications, 1995), p. 17). I use *battle deaths* as the measurement of the control variable of *conflict intensity* in my analysis.

[333] Thus, the Battle Deaths Dataset does not distinguish between different parties to a conflict, as well as between combatants and civilians, with the latter also being counted as casualties of battles (Lacina and Gleditsch, "Monitoring Trends in Global Combat"). Since the categorical variable of conflict intensity from the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset is based on the Battle Deaths Dataset, it does not distinguish between different categories of war casualties either (Gleditsch et. al., "Armed Conflict 1946–2001," 2002).

associated with a *conventional warfare*, as opposed to *guerilla fighting*. One of the differences between the two is that conventional warfare "finds expression mostly on the operational level, where the enemy is directly attacked in confrontations with the armed forces of the opposing state or in an offensive against its capital."[334] In guerilla fighting, rebels engage predominantly in "tactical strikes on railway bridges, power installations and the lives of politicians."[335] Those armed groups which engage in *conventional warfare* – that being defined here as involving face to face open battles with an opponent for large military and state power targets – I argue, will require additional mobilization of fighters. There are two reasons for this belief.

First, conventional warfare in the open battlefield, as opposed to guerrilla fighting in the bush or hidden terrain, generates the need for larger armies of foot soldiers in the ranks of the attacking side. According to Isabelle Duyvesteyn, the capital cannot be "taken by the use of small arms alone, nor could it be captured by a small number of fighters."[336] As evidence from Somalian and Liberia suggests, "factions commanded a large number of fighters during the advance on the capital."[337] This is because the strategic military targets, such as the capital, are most likely to be rigorously defended by the opposing state army. For example, even in the case of Liberia in 1990, when "Monrovia did not have any formal defences," the loosing government soldiers were still relying on their comparative advantage of possessing heavy artillery weapons to fight for the capital prior to the arrival of the ECOMOG forces.[338]

Second, aside from the initial need of large armies to overtake highly defended installations, insurgents engaging in the conventional warfare are most likely to have higher attrition rates, which, in turn, generate the high demand for additional combatants. Rebel fighters in conventional warfare have to operate openly, as opposed to covertly, and in most cases against the defensive fire of heavy weapons artillery. As such, these battles will have higher number of military casualties than guerrilla attacks. It is possible that adults will be more reluctant to participate in such suicidal massacres reminiscent of the pre-21st century historical battles, which will make such a direct armed contestation even more relevant to child soldier recruitment. Ironically, child combatants become very convenient for conventional warfare as "fearless" (relative to adults) and "disposable" bodies.[339]

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[334] Duyvesteyn, *Clausewitz and African War*, p. 17.
[335] Ibid., p. 17.
[336] Ibid., p. 101.
[337] Ibid., p. 101.
[338] Ibid., p. 29. For the description of the first battle and government soldiers' defense of Monrovia see Ogunleye, *Behind Rebel Line*, p. 19.
[339] After reviewing psychological studies that examined fearlessness of children in peacetime contexts, Andvig and Gates concluded that young people may outperform adults in this characteristic (Andvig and Gates, "Recruiting Children for Armed Conflict," p. 17). Refer to the literature review in Chapter 2 for a further discussion of this point.

After establishing that, from the conflict intensity point of view, the most direct conceptual representation of demand for combatants would be an indicator of whether an armed group participated in battles for strategic targets, I need to find the way of operationalizing the latter concept. While it is possible to identify whether an armed group had fought with the opposing side over the capital, it is indeed very difficult to compile data on whether insurgents engaged in other battles of strategic importance, such as regional centers, weapons warehouses, airports, or seaports.[340] Therefore, I propose a variable that, as I argue, signifies the propensity of an armed group to engage in battles for strategic military targets, which in turn requires conventional warfare and large numbers of foot soldiers. This variable is the rebels' *fighting capacity* relative to the opponent, defined as the insurgents' ability to challenge the government and win battles. The fighting capacity concept is not contingent on rebel numbers, but is rather linked to the idea of efficiency of the armed forces of rebels. For example, the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), while having fewer troops than the government, was winning the battles and thus exhibited greater fighting capacity than the state army.[341]

With more victories over the opponent, groups with higher fighting capacity, I argue, are more likely to arrive closer to their ultimate goal of the military campaign – be it secession or a transfer of state power, achievement of autonomy, or acquisition of a political post in a ruling state system. Military victories of "successful" groups can further alter their initial modest objectives to more ambitious goals. Overtaking the capital or a major strategic site will achieve a military triumph that can be used to shift the balance of domestic or internationalized political negotiations to the group's advantage. In order to move to such a decisive step, "successful" (as opposed to "unsuccessful") armed groups with high fighting capacity will have to boost their ranks of combatants even higher.[342] Thus, I propose the following Hypothesis 1: *Armed groups are more likely to recruit children if their fighting capacity is high.*

Somewhat similar to my hypothesis, Andvig and Gates also suggested that war intensity might determine the demand for child soldiers in the situations of excess supply of combatants.[343] However, in their view the direct competition of an armed group with its opponents in severe and numerous battles

[340] My effort to collect data on whether armed groups fought over the capital during the conflicts has inconclusive results as of now. In my next project, however, this measurement of struggle intensity and conventional warfare will also be utilized.
[341] Alan Kuperman, "Explaining the Ultimate Escalation in Rwanda: How and Why Tutsi Rebels Provoked a Retaliatory Genocide," Working Paper, Prepared for delivery at the 99th Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Philadelphia, PA, August 28 – 31, 2003.
[342] This proposition is seemingly counterintuitive to the natural expectation that "successful" groups with high fighting capacity are the ones that do not require any additional soldiers as they are already challenging the government. I propose here exactly the opposite logic which suggests that the more an armed group engages its opponent militarily, the more ambitious its goals become and the need for fighters increases with every military victory.
[343] Andvig and Gates, "Recruiting Children for Armed Conflict," p. 16.

should be negatively correlated with the presence of children among insurgents.[344] Such groups, they argue, will favor the adults. Part of the logic of their argument can be summarized in their own words as follows: "if the violent competition is a low scale one, it is easier to organize consumption in the military units in the same way as in ordinary households, so they will include many tasks that are ordinarily performed by children, and will demand more children for non-combatant tasks."[345] Yet another logical explanation for Andvig and Gates' argument can be found in their belief that "if heavy, expensive and complex weapons or the disciplined coordination of large units of soldiers are necessary, children are less useful."[346] These authors also suggest that loss of battles (low fighting capacity) will create an additional pressure on the armed groups to recruit more personnel, and probably children.[347] Neither in Andvig and Gates' theoretical paper nor elsewhere has this statement been subject to empirical testing.

Material Rewards for Adults to Join. Demand for combatants, generated by the nature of armed struggle in which military factions engage, may or may not be met by existing inflow of recruits. Any remaining need for additional soldiers might be, however, further covered by offering material rewards to potential members. When demand for combatants, determined externally by certain characteristics of armed conflict (fighting capacity in my model), is high, the degree of insurgents' access to material resources will be crucial for the ability of armed groups to recruit additional adults. In general, therefore, the ability of an armed group to provide pecuniary incentives to their personnel should be negatively correlated with child soldiering, as there will be a pool of willing adults to join the military organization in exchange for cash.

There is lingering doubt, however, whether some greedy organizations or their greedy leaders and commanders would actually want to share the material gains with new incoming fighters. Andvig and Gates contemplate that organizations that rely on economic incentives might have, in fact, "more to gain financially by employing children."[348] That is because "selective economic incentives are expensive and most rebel organizations are poor even when their violence activities are the most individually remunerative in the neighborhood. Hence, their leaderships would try to keep the number of members who are allowed to share in the net income restricted."[349] Since children, in their view, "are more easily kept away from sharing," they would make better candidates as new recruits for organizations with material capacity.

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[344] Ibid., p. 16.
[345] Ibid., p. 11.
[346] Ibid., p. 11. This notion is paralleled in the Andvig and Gates' review of the research on child labor, which "in general suggests that children have rarely been given responsibility for technically complex and expensive equipment." From these observations they conclude, somewhat arbitrarily, that "there is no reason to believe it will be otherwise in child soldiering."
[347] Ibid., p. 15.
[348] Ibid., p. 10.
[349] Ibid., p. 10.

It is not immediately clear, though, that armed groups with material resources will easily resort to recruiting children rather than paying adults. First, the central leadership might still be interested in hiring the adult fighters who are arguably more likely to win battles and help achieve the major goals of the movement. Second, the rebel leaders might not be operating solely by material cost considerations, as they might have other normative constraints such as maintaining the popular support, as I show below in the consecutive sections of this chapter. Third, one might still argue that even if an armed group is driven solely by the logic of greed, the more material resources are available to the armed group, the lower its concerns about sharing the benefits with new incoming fighters might be.

Consider in this regard the example of the RENAMO armed group in Mozambique, which apparently switched from its "extensive use of economic incentives" to forced and child recruitment after its support from South Africa disappeared. The infamous recruiter of underage warriors – the LRA group in Northern Uganda – was also deprived of material resources.[350] In addition, contrary to Andvig and Gates, Beber and Blattman postulate that armed groups with material resources might resort to child recruitment and forced conscription of adults "only when these resources are insufficient to mobilize a sufficiently large rebel force."[351] Even in such a case, as these authors suggest, rebels will not recruit children and adults forcibly if the sources of their finance depend on the "goodwill" of domestic or international groups.[352] As such, larger material capacity of an armed group might still be negatively correlated with child soldiering.

While it might be impossible to assess for the large-*N* sample whether and how insurgencies distributed salaries to their soldiers, there might be indicators that represent the concept of material rewards. I therefore introduce a proxy of *material capacity* that indicates armed groups' potential to compensate their fighters as reflected in the material capability of the movement. The task of this operationalization exercise is further reduced to identifying which military organizations are more likely to possess financial means in order to be able to consider paying their fighters.[353] A study of the World Bank on the economics of rebellion identified three major sources of funding widely used by insurgents to sustain their operations: "extortion of natural resources, donations from diasporas, and subventions from hostile governments."[354] In the presence of such material resources, it is believed, armed groups are more

[350] These examples were cited in Andvig and Gates, "Recruiting Children for Armed Conflict," p. 10.
[351] Beber and Blattman, "The Industrial Organization of Rebellion," p. 22.
[352] Ibid., p. 22.
[353] In his work Jeremy Weinstein utilizes such proxy in the large-*N* empirical test of his argument. Thus, access to material resources of a group is used to measure a group's ability to offer material rewards to its recruits (Jeremy Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion*, p. 306).
[354] Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, "Greed and Grievance in Civil War," *Oxford Economic Papers 56*, 2004, p. 565.

likely to form "because it enables rebel leaders to finance recruitment and purchase the military resources needed for war." [355]

There are of course many other non-traditional forms of financing a rebellion, such as looting civilian and state property, "taxation of humanitarian assistance, contributions of individuals, kidnapping, asset transfers from civilians, landing fees or revenues from portfolio investments."[356] On the one hand, these resources are also proclaimed to be "less effective strategies of conflict financing because on their own they are unlikely to finance a major armed conflict."[357] On the other hand, however, these types of revenue extraction may still be important "because spoilers only need few resources to pay for the renewal of a low intensity conflict."[358] Due to the absence of readily available data these potential sources of rebel finance will not be included in my statistical testing.[359] However, in the case study analyses I do review these marginal sources of revenues of military movements. In my statistical analysis, however, I examine three sources of rebel funding specified in the World Bank project. Below I outline how I operationalize these three types of material resources.

Natural Resources. The importance of natural resources in conflicts has been analyzed and noted by many researchers before and after the World Bank study.[360] Although the mechanisms describing how exactly the natural resources affect conflict onset or duration still remain largely unexplained, one particular causal chain has been well established. This chain leads from extractable resource access to financing rebel organizations' operations and thus facilitating conflict onset and influencing its duration.[361] The end of the Cold War is often blamed for turning natural resources into an important

[355] Collier and Hoeffler, "Greed and Grievance in Civil War," referred to in Jeremy Weinstein, "The Structure of Rebel Organizations: Implications for Post-Conflict Reconstruction Conflict," Dissemination Note No. 4 (Stanford: Prevention and Reconstruction Unit, Social Development Department, June 2002), p.1.
[356] Achim Wennmann, "Conflict Financing and the Recurrence of Intra-State Armed Conflict," Dissertation Thesis No. 753 (Institute of International Studies, Geneva, 2007), p. 33. Some of these sources of rebel financing were mentioned in Jeremy Weinstein, "The Structure of Rebel Organizations," p.1. Recent stories of revived piracy in the Indian Ocean showed how easily armed individuals from Somalia and other African countries could enrich themselves in this way. It is not known yet, however, whether these acts of international crime could become a significant source of finance to rebels, as opposed to small criminal gangs.
[357] Wennmann, "Conflict Financing and the Recurrence of Intra-State Armed Conflict," p. 33.
[358] Ibid., p. 33.
[359] The reason for this is not only the absence of existing datasets on the opportunity to loot experienced by armed groups, but also a difficulty of an enterprise to collect such data systematically for my large-*N* sample.
[360] For a broader overview of this literature see the following studies: Ross, "What Do We Know about Natural Resources and Civil War?" and Philippe Le Billon, "The Political Ecology of War: Natural Resources and Armed Conflicts," *Political Geography,* Issue 20 (2001), pp. 561–84.
[361] For a review and test of five existing causal mechanisms between natural resources and conflict see Michael Ross, "A Closer Look at Oil, Diamonds, and Civil War," *Annual Review of Political Science,* Vol. 9 (2006), pp. 265–30. Ross also suggests a partial statistical support for the particular causal mechanism linking natural resources to financing of rebellion.

source of rebel funding.[362] More belligerents were observed "to rely on revenues from commodities such as timber, oil, narcotics, or precious minerals" and a number of studies have been conducted on exploring this role of natural resources in conflicts.[363] There have been two major ways of operationalizing natural resources in the literature: an approximation of the share of natural (mineral in this case) resources in the country's GDP and their presence in the country or conflict zone.[364] I choose to utilize the second more specific indicator rather than a crude amalgamation of the first.

Since my study focuses on only one role of natural resources – funding rebel operations, including their recruitment of fighters – I look only at *lootable* and *obstructable* natural resources that have the highest revenue generating potential. *Lootable* resources are ones that are susceptible to easy extraction by individuals or small groups "with simple methods" by "unskilled workers" and that can be subject to official sale or smuggling by contraband.[365] Such commodities as secondary (or alluvial) diamonds and other gemstones, narcotics, and timber are widely known as *lootable* resources.[366] Resources are *obstructable* if their "transportation can be easily blocked by a small number of individuals with relatively inexpensive weapons."[367] For example, while oil cannot be considered a *lootable* commodity, as it requires enormous effort from a controlling armed group in organizing its extraction, production, and transportation, rebels may still profit from this resource by levying taxes on oil producing companies or

[362] Le Billon, "Diamond Wars?" p. 345. Michael Ross suggests that there is a strong case study evidence for this increasing trend in rebels' reliance on resource-looting after the Cold War, but empirical studies are yet to find the statistical support for such claim (Ross, "What Do We Know about Natural Resources and Civil War?" p. 349).
[363] For an overview of the studies that found these resources to play an important role in financing rebel movements see Le Billon, "Diamond Wars?" p. 345.
[364] For the full list of measurements used in the armed conflict literature to represent natural resources refer to Table 1 on page 339 in Ross, "What Do We Know about Natural Resources and Civil War?"
[365] This definition is composed of several available in the literature. Most of the existing definitions emphasize the ease of extraction of lootable resources, as in the works of Päivi Lujala, "Deadly Combat over Natural Resources: Gems, Petroleum, Drugs, and The Severity of Armed Civil Conflict," Working Paper (Norwegian University of Science and Technology & Centre for the Study of Civil War, International Peace Research Institute, Oslo (PRIO), 2008), p. 30 and Ross, "What Do We Know about Natural Resources and Civil War?" p. 350. Other studies, however, also stress the criteria of ease of selling (Halvard Buhaug, Päivi Lujala, "Accounting for Scale: Measuring Geography in Quantitative Studies of Civil War," *Political Geography*, Issue 24 (2005), pp. 399-418, at p. 407).
[366] These commodities were treated as *lootable* in the following studies, among others: Ross, "A Closer Look at Oil, Diamonds, and Civil War," p. 294; Lujala, "Deadly Combat over Natural Resources," p. 30; James Fearon, "Why Do Some Civil Wars Last Much Longer than Others?" *Journal of Peace Research* 41 (2004), pp. 275–303, at p. 284. Non-lootable resources include oil, natural gas, and deep-shaft minerals (such as 'primary' diamonds) (Ross, "A Closer Look at Oil, Diamonds, and Civil War," p. 294). Bauxite mines are yet another example of deep-shaft minerals, which are "more difficult for rebels to exploit" (Buhaug and Lujala, "Accounting for Scale," p. 407). For a discussion on the ease of exploitation of some of the lootable commodities, such as alluvial diamonds, see Le Billon, "Diamond Wars?" p. 361: "The opportunities that diamonds (particularly alluvial) provide for combatants in mining and marketing are conventionally cited as reasons why diamonds are conflict resources, well-suited, given their physical characteristics, to sustain armed conflict. The financial opportunity factor is thus broadly confirmed…"
[367] Ross, "What Do We Know about Natural Resources and Civil War?" p. 350.

stealing the product.[368] Oil theft, or the so-called "oil bunkering," as opposed to oil extraction, is also proven to offer a viable financial resource for some rebels, as evidence from Nigeria suggests.[369]

Diaspora Support. Emigrant communities settled in other countries are known to "feel keenly" about insurgencies in their homelands and frequently support them in the form of funding, arms, and even recruits.[370] Diaspora size and location do seem to matter when it comes to influencing a homeland struggle. For example, if a country emerging from civil conflict has an unusually large diaspora in the United States, its chances of reverting to conflict are six times higher than in nations with small diaspora populations in the United States. Thus, "diasporas appear to make life for those left behind much more dangerous in post-conflict situations."[371] Diaspora assistance has been directed at rebels in "every region of the globe, except Latin America."[372] It has "proven pivotal in sustaining insurgent campaigns" and at times has significantly increased insurgents' capabilities while enabling them "to withstand government counterinsurgency efforts."[373]

Third State Subventions. Unlike diaspora support or other non-state actors' assistance, "states remain among the most important, and most active, supporters of insurgent groups."[374] State assistance was proven to help rebel movements sustain their operations and "improve their overall military and political effectiveness."[375] It is not restricted to specific countries or ideological goals of rebels and insurgencies in Asia, Africa, Europe and the Middle East were all known to benefit from this type of support.[376] More

[368] Natural resource extraction businesses are, in fact, regarded as indifferent towards the entity they are paying their taxes, be it a warlord or a state official, as long as they "sustain access to the resources and protect their investments" (Halvard Buhaug and Scott Gates, "The Geography of Civil War," *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 39, no. 4 (July 2002), pp. 417-433, at p. 419, citing Le Billon, "The Political Ecology of War," p. 569).
[369] Nils Duquet, "Fuelling Insurgency: Oil Revenues and the Financing of Rebel Groups," Paper presented at the Annual Meetings of the ISA's 50th Annual Convention, New York, Feb 15, 2009. "'Bunkering' is a term used to describe the process of filling a ship with oil (or coal). 'Illegal oil bunkering' is an euphemism for theft. Theft of crude oil, known as illegal oil bunkering, accounts for perhaps 10 percent of Nigeria's daily production and is a highly organized operation" (Human Rights Watch, *The Warri Crisis: Fueling Violence*, HRW Report, Vol. 15, No.18 (A) (November 2003), p. 17).
[370] Daniel Byman, Peter Chalk, Bruce Hoffman, William Rosenau, David Brannan, *Trends in Outside Support for Insurgent Movements* (RAND Monograph Report, Prepared for the Office of Transnational Issues, 2001), p. 41. For more on diaspora support see Collier and Hoeffler, "Greed and Grievance in Civil War," and Yossi Shain and Martin Sherman, "Dynamics of Disintegration: Diaspora Secession and the Paradox of Nation-States," *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol. 4, No. 3, 1998, pp. 321-346.
[371] Paul Collier, *Economic Causes of Civil Conflict* (World Bank: Washington, DC, 2000), p. 6.
[372] Byman et. al., *Trends in Outside Support for Insurgent Movements*, p. 41.
[373] Ibid., p. 41.
[374] Ibid., p. 9.
[375] Ibid., p. 9. "Although guerrilla groups were rarely able to defeat organized armies on the battlefield, outside state support helped movements deprive their government adversaries of quick and easy victories. In many cases, this prolonged the conflict and increased the chance of a political settlement more favorable to the insurgents."
[376] Ibid., p. 17.

often than not, state assistance comes from the neighboring governments "that border the country in which a group is fighting."[377]

I propose the following Hypothesis 2: A*rmed groups with higher material capacity (access to natural resources, diaspora support or/and third state support) are less likely to have children in their ranks.*

Demand for Children

Legitimacy and Insecure Environments. As some examples above demonstrate, demand for combatants does not necessarily lead to a decision by an armed group to recruit children. Thus, in the situation of shortage of combatants, an armed group might not be able to proceed to conscription or enlistment of minors, because there might be a cost associated with such a strategy. This cost can be manifested in the withdrawal of civilian support from insurgents relying on local populations for financial support, logistics, and recruits. This is because typically a civil society is opposed to the recruitment of children for armed conflict. Consider, for example, the results of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) interviews and group discussions regarding the attitudes of people from 12 countries towards war-related issues.[378] Thus, 93% of all informants who responded to the question about age of person's maturity to be a fighter or soldier suggested that it should be over 18 years old.[379] Of particular relevance here is an account of a woman from El Salvador who depicts the situation of people's attitudes to child recruitment in the conflict zone:

> "I remember that the soldiers fell all over the youth, and the youth joined up to kill each other. I would have preferred for them to be run over and killed by a car than to kill each other. The guerrillas, if the mothers didn't let their sons sign up, they'd kill them at 10 to 12 years old. They didn't consider the young age of the recruits."[380]

When, during my informal talks to adult Liberians who did not join the conflict, I asked about the normalcy of the child soldier phenomenon, none of the participants of my discussions indicated support for such a practice. They were all willing to accept those former children into the community and forget the atrocities committed by underage soldiers, but they did not approve of the practice of child recruitment, as far as I could tell. Therefore, child recruitment practice might not be favored by civilians and even by supporters of rebels.

At the same time, however, under certain circumstances, voluntary enlistment of children might not compromise the legitimacy of an armed group among its popular base. For example, in the situations of extreme insecurity in certain conflicts, children might approach military organizations themselves in

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[377] Ibid., p. 17.
[378] Greenberg Research, Inc., *The People on War Report: ICRC Worldwide Consultation on the Rules of War* (ICRC: Geneva, December 1999). The surveyed countries include Afghanistan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Cambodia, Colombia, El Salvador, Georgia/Abkhazia, Israel, the occupied territories and the autonomous territories, Lebanon, Nigeria, Philippines, Somalia and South Africa.
[379] Greenberg Research, Inc., *The People on War Report*, Figure 5, p. 10.
[380] This account was offered in Greenberg Research, Inc., *The People on War Report*, p. 9.

search of physical protection. The accounts of this mode of enlistment of children prevail in the practitioners' and academic literature. During the conflict in Sierra Leone, for example, children were reported to join government and rebel forces because "being under arms was both *safer and more economically secure* than remaining in the unarmed, vulnerable, and economically ruined civilian sector."[381] The same defensive logic of physical protection could apply to the Liberian conflict, as two thirds of all former child soldiers in my survey who enlisted into armed groups themselves as opposed to being abducted reported joining for security and protection reasons, such as fear of alternatives, due to the perception that inside the armed group was safer, or for pure defense considerations.[382] At the same time, enlistment of minors by an armed group under the lack of alternatives for children might not be perceived as unacceptable by the population. Therefore, while generally voluntary recruitment of children might not be an option to armed groups constrained by concerns about their domestic legitimacy, in the situations of extreme insecurity this restriction can be raised and children can be absorbed into the ranks of armed movements without any damage to the popular image of the rebels.

What would exemplify the situations of extreme insecurity during the conflict that would make children go and search for armed groups themselves and that would leave rebels exempt from public scrutiny while enlisting minors? It is very difficult to imagine a conflict that is safe for a child, but some armed struggles, nevertheless, can pose a graver threat to the lives of children and civilian adults than others. Studies on violence against civilians typically start with the notion that brutality varies significantly across armed conflicts and insurgencies, and that some segments of the population can be more spared or protected than others.[383] While many vulnerable groups in conflicts can be identified, it is ethnicity that often defines the victims of targeted violence and mass killings.[384] When, in addition to being killed as collateral casualties of ongoing battles, civilians become targets of mass persecution on ethnic grounds, then, I argue, conflicts are more likely to generate crowds of children (as well as adults of the same ethnic origin) seeking protection in popular armed movements. The latter, under such extreme circumstances, might not bear the legitimacy cost for enlisting minors.

As a general rule, the victims of ethnic persecution would approach armed movements that fight against delinquents. For example, recent conflict in Chad had children of the endangered Tama ethnic

[381] Rosen, *Armies of the Young*, p. 85.
[382] My own survey of former child soldiers in Ghana in Winter 2008. Altogether, these children constituted 41% of all former child soldiers.
[383] The two most prominent works that established and tested variance in perpetration of violence against civilians are those by Jeremy Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion*, and Stathis Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).
[384] Because literature on violence against civilians has just started to emerge recently, it is not possible to generalize yet which groups of population are most victimized in armed conflicts. However, more often than not, it is ethnicity, rather than any other identity distinction among civilian groups of population, that becomes the primary target of deliberate selective violence.

group joining for protection the armed faction of the United Front for Change (FUC), which militarily opposed pro-government Zaghawa militias harassing the Tama people.[385] Similar examples can be found in the contexts of Burundi and Sierra Leone, among others, where children were enlisting into local defense armed groups to protect their communities and themselves from ethnic harassment.[386] However, there might be exceptions to this trend in some conflict situations where potential protectors may be too weak to provide defense or where they can be located in inaccessible areas behind impenetrable rebel lines. Under such circumstances, quite paradoxically, children (and even adults) might join the forces of attackers to secure their lives by demonstrating their loyalty to the persecuting tribe.[387] Nevertheless, I would argue that more generally than not would potential victims of ethnic persecution join the armed groups that oppose their offenders. Thus, Hypothesis 3 reads as follows: *Armed groups that operate in conflicts with ethnic persecution are more likely to have children in their ranks.*

Supply of Children

Access to People. Once an insurgency arrives at a decision to recruit children, it might have to deal with the problem of low supply of underage recruits. Whether the areas are depopulated or unwilling children hide and try to avoid recruitment, rebels might not see any children around for enlistment or conscription. For example, Rachel Brett argues that "Colombia's extensive internal displacement is fueled by many factors including efforts to avoid child recruitment by either side and by children escaping from these groups and seeking to avoid re-recruitment."[388] Children and their families who do not flee conflicts often invent other means of avoiding abduction of children from their home villages. The most extreme example is Northern Uganda with children commuting every night to nearby towns for fear of being recruited at home villages.[389] Under such circumstances the actual recruitment of children might depend on the size of territories to which rebels have access. The larger the size of the territory, the more populated is the accessible pool of civilians and, consequently, the higher is the chance that some children will be captured on the territories infiltrated by rebels.

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[385] CSUCS, *Child Soldiers,* 2008, pp. 92-93, citing HRW, *Early to War: Child Soldiers in the Chad Conflict*, July 2007.

[386] This is how Phil Lancaster describes the situation of child enlistment into rebel groups in Burundi: "Children sometimes saw themselves as part of an ethnic community driven to fight in self-defence against an army with genocidal intentions" (Phil Lancaster, "Categories and Illusions: Child Soldiers in Burundi," Paper presented at the workshop "Building Knowledge about Children in Armed Conflict" in Oslo, Norway, May 2006). Many children who fought in Sierra Leonean ethnic militias did that for defensive motives in order to protect their homes and villages (Rosen, *Armies of the Young*, p. 160).

[387] The Liberian conflict can be regarded as one such example. For instance, many children (and adults) of the Krahn and Mandingo endangered tribes joined the ranks of both defending (LPC and ULIMOs) and persecuting (NPFL and INPFL) armed factions, according to my survey respondents.

[388] Brett, "The Connection between Flight and Child Soldiers," p. 19.

[389] The plight of Northern Ugandan children is well documented in the documentary *Invisible Children*. According to the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, "in July 2003 more than 20,000 child "night commuters" were estimated to seek safety each night in Gulu, Pader and Kitgum towns, to reduce the risk of abduction" (CSUCS, *Child Soldiers*, 2005, p. 106).

It is also possible that armed groups with larger territories might have higher mobility and ability to be stationed further away from their primary constituency or supportive civilian settlements. This, in turn, means that such armed groups might have more freedom in violating certain norms of domestic population by recruiting children while being away from the eyes of their supporters and thus avoiding reputation losses. The latter point was suggested as a potential prediction of child conscription in the work of Beber and Blattman: "as rebel groups move into territory distant in spatial or social terms from their support base" there should be a greater likelihood of forced recruitment of children.[390]

How to determine if insurgent groups have access to people and territories during armed conflict? If the rebels control a large portion of a country, I argue, they would most likely have a better access to people living there, including children. Likewise, access to territories in neighboring countries which host war refugees, might also offer belligerents an advantage of perfect "fishing grounds" with massive numbers of people clustered together in unprotected camps on a small geographical space.[391] As children flee their homes to avoid abductions, however, they end up in places such as IDP or refugee camps, where, ironically, they might not be safer but on the contrary, at larger risk of recruitment. Thus, armed groups are known to infiltrate camps and "enlist or seize inhabitants (including children) through the use of coercion or propaganda – a phenomenon referred to as "refugee manipulation and militarization."[392] The UNHCR estimated recently, for example, that approximately 15 percent of refugee crises "foment refugee militarization."[393] The following example demonstrates how establishments of Liberian insurgents in refugee camps and the factions' control of the territories at home were going hand in hand with child soldier recruitment: "MODEL recruited children from refugee camps in Côte d'Ivoire and further swelled their ranks with children as they advanced towards Buchanan, Grand Bassa County, over which they took control on 26 July 2003."[394] Therefore, Hypothesis 4 postulates*: Armed groups with access to larger territories are more likely to recruit children.*

Section 2. Recruitment for Popular and Unpopular Armed Groups

In the previous section I proposed four key explanations behind insurgencies' child soldier recruitment practice – namely *fighting capacity*, *material capacity*, *ethnic persecution* and *territorial access*. I further argue that the explanatory power of these four factors fundamentally depends on whether an armed group is popular among the people or not. *Popularity* of an armed group is defined as its ability

[390] Beber and Blattman, "The Industrial Organization of Rebellion," p. 22. This prediction, according to Beber and Blattman, is also consistent with theoretical propositions of Gates (Scott Gates, "Recruitment and Allegiance: The Microfoundations of Rebellion," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 46(1), 2002, pp. 111-130).
[391] For a more detailed elaboration on this issue see Achvarina and Reich, "No Place to Hide," as well as Chapter 2 of this dissertation on the literature review.
[392] Stephen John Stedman and Fred Tanner, "Refugees as Resources in War," in Stedman and Tanner, *Refugee Manipulation*, p. 4.
[393] Stedman and Tanner, "Refugees as Resources in War," p. 3.
[394] Amnesty International*, The Promises of Peace for 21,000 Child Soldiers*, p. 5.

to draw participatory support from a particular segment of the society on the basis of some ideological grounds. In other words, expression of participatory support for a group is a signal of the degree of its approval by a certain segment of society that shares the real or proclaimed goals of the rebels and is willing to fight for them. Defined as such, *popular* groups are the ones that draw in ideologically motivated and willing supporters in large quantities. The opposite of the popular movement is an *unpopular* insurgency, which does not seek or manage to secure considerable approval from the local population. As a result, nobody wants to join an unpopular movement voluntarily on ideological grounds.

It should be noted here that my classification of groups into popular and unpopular ones may seem somewhat similar to Jeremy Weinstein's distinction between groups with social and material endowments.[395] However, as I show below, a group's *popularity* as defined here and Weinstein's *social endowments* do not represent the same concept, differing along a number of important dimensions. *Social endowments*, according to Weinstein, are used by rebels "to signal support for a cause, make promises of future benefits credible, coordinate actions across individuals, and work within social networks that ease the process of recruiting members and generating the supplies necessary for war."[396] According to Weinstein, as well as other scholars, such a "cohesion (or 'social capital')" can be based on ethnic identities, for example, or "may also come from other shared identities (religious, cultural, or regional) or ideological belief-systems, such as Marxism, Maoism, or capitalism, that bring individuals together and harmonize their behavior."[397] *Material endowments* of armed groups are based on resources that "can be generated internally (through the extortion of natural resources, the production of illegal drugs, trade in legal goods, or from taxes levied for protection) or solicited externally (from foreign powers, ethnic and religious diasporas, or criminal networks)."[398]

These motives can all serve as potential ideological grounds on which insurgents mobilize people into their ranks. Rebel efforts to capitalize on these different ideologies, as well as the choice of ideologies themselves, vary across different contexts. As a result, one might see different degrees of popularity exhibited by various insurgencies, while all rely on social endowments. As has been mentioned above, the TPLF movement of Ethiopia (1976-91) was regarded as a popular insurgency, while the LRA of Northern Uganda was considered very unpopular. Both these examples are particularly interesting, as they show how resort to some ideological appeals by armed groups, even despite the strategy's well-known success in mobilizing people in other contexts, might not generate popular support for other movements, as demonstrated below.

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[395] Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion;* Weinstein, "The Structure of Rebel Organizations."
[396] Weinstein, "The Structure of Rebel Organizations," p. 2. .
[397] Ibid., p. 2. As indicated in the introduction of this dissertation, in his book "One for All" Russell Hardin mentions the following ideological grounds, among others, which allow mobilization of people for violence: ethnic hatred, nationalism, self-defense, self-determination, territorial considerations (Hardin, *One for All*, pp. 142-155).
[398] Ibid., p. 1.

Consider that upon its formation, the TPLF's leadership attempted to mobilize people on the secession grounds, suggesting independence of the Tuareg people from the Ethiopian nation-state. However, "this extreme position was challenged as soon as it emerged and was relinquished straightaway, since it had no popular support…"[399] An alternative ideological ground had to be found and the TPLF switched to class ideologies of radical change, and less extreme forms of self-determination, expressed in ethno-nationalist ideologies, in order to mobilize Tigrayans.[400] In the context of Uganda, Joseph Kony was using religious rhetoric to appeal to the population of Northern Uganda: "According to Kony, he is possessed by the Holy Spirit and have received divine orders to replace the Ugandan constitution with the Ten Commandments."[401] Unpopularity of the LRA in this regard can be contrasted with a popular support for historical Crusades or those terrorist movements which base their ideology on religion.

There is a number of distinctive features that differentiate my classification into popular and unpopular armed groups from Weinstein's endowments framework. Below I will outline those differences, providing further clarification of my concept of armed groups' *popularity*. First, Weinstein's definition of *social endowments* is focused on insurgents' strategy, as opposed to the end result of it, as my conceptualization of popularity does. Thus, my definition of popular groups focuses on the establishment of the "cohesion", not simply an effort to achieve it, which results in the presence of masses willing to join rebels. Weinstein's framework does not make such a distinction because for him what matters is the process of recruitment strategy, with the ultimate result being the quality of fighters, not their quantity. In my theoretical framework, however, I am interested in potential numbers of willing recruits, or, alternatively, in the size of the recruitment pool of voluntary soldiers for an armed group in question.

The size of the potential voluntary recruitment pool should also be distinguished from the concept of actual numbers of fighters within the group. The latter represents a different concept of an armed group's *strength* in terms of rebel numbers and, therefore, does not reflect the scope of people actually joining a military organization. The latter is of particular importance as the numbers of recruited soldiers can also be driven by material incentives or forced conscription and thus may not represent solely the group's popularity. Enlistment on pecuniary incentives is accounted for in my analysis by inclusion of another variable of *material capacity*.

The second distinction of my classification of armed groups based on their popularity from Weinstein's framework of endowments is in the role of the material support concept in the delineation of

[399] Aregawi Berhe, "The Origins of The Tigray People's Liberation Front," *African Affairs* (2004), 103/413, 569–592, p. 591.
[400] Ibid., p. 569.
[401] Lawrence E. Cline, "Spirits and the Cross: Religiously Based Violent Movements in Uganda," *Small Wars & Insurgencies* (2003), 14: 2, pp. 113-130, p. 119. "Beyond this basic goal, the ideology of the LRA can best be described as confusing (and possibly confused)" (Ibid., p. 119).

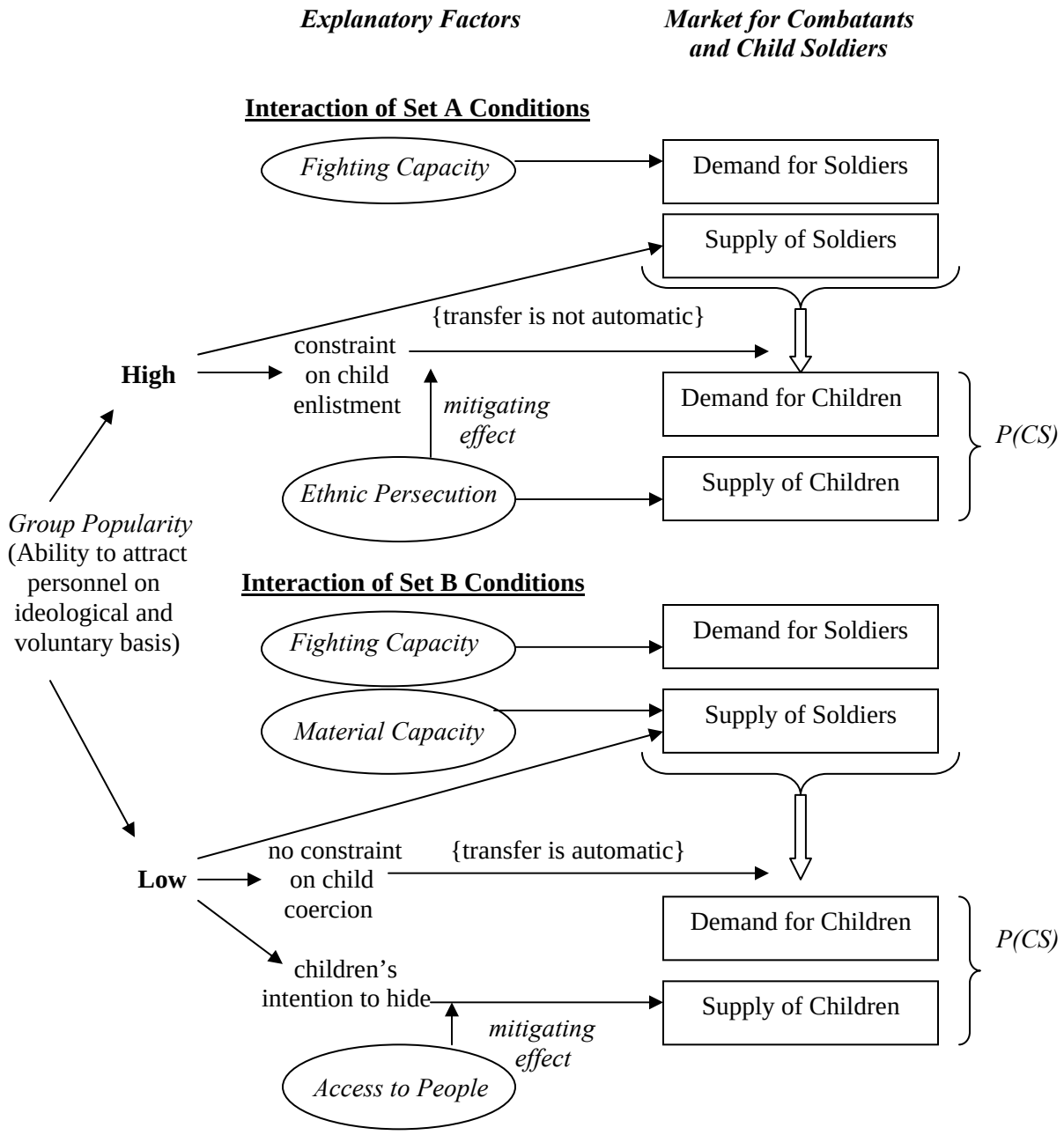
categories in the typology. In Weinstein's work insurgencies based on social endowments are believed to be the ones without access to material resources, and are measured as such in his empirical study.[402] Weinstein does admit that some armed groups might rely on both material and ideational endowments, but these cases should be quite rare, according to him, as ideational endowments get overcrowded by pecuniary rewards as time goes by.[403] Unlike Weinstein, therefore, I assume that popular armed groups (that attract personnel on ideational motives) may still have access to material resources and even use those resources to compensate some or all of their soldiers. Not surprisingly, when I examined 112 African armed groups in my sample, about 80% of popular groups actually did have access to some type of material resources, which should not be the case if my classification was similar to Weinstein's theory. This is because social and material endowments are not necessarily mutually exclusive categories, as suggested in Weinstein's framework. Out of unpopular groups, which should have been based on material resources according to Weinstein, only 50% in my sample actually had material endowments.[404]

The underlying logic of my classification between popular and unpopular armed groups is, therefore, in rebels' different ability to attract members for active military campaign. While there might be many factors affecting the popularity of an armed group, I operationalize this concept through the group's *capacity to mobilize* personnel, or, in my particular case, a probability of a potential inflow of ideologically motivated adult volunteers. Thus, the determinants of child participation in these two distinct popular and unpopular types of movements will be conceptually different. This is because incentives and constraints characterizing armed groups that operate in the context of large voluntary inflow of both adults and children are dissimilar from the ones of insurgencies that lack adult and child volunteers alike.

I stress that the popularity of an armed movement in itself is not proposed as an explanatory factor behind child soldier recruitment. More specifically, I do not suggest the relationship between military factions' popularity and their resort to conscription and enlistment of minors. What I do argue, however, is that the nature of insurgencies' popularity is delineating two distinct contexts where different opportunities are affecting rebels' strategic choices and where different obstacles inhibit the insurgents in their resort to forced or voluntary recruitment of children. In a word, the level of group popularity signifies which of those different opportunities and costs matter for an armed group in question.

[402] Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion,* p. 306.
[403] Ibid., p. 52.
[404] Interestingly, this latter finding undermines the claim of economic theories of rebellion, according to which armed groups that lack both material and ideational endowments have a very low chance for survival or even formation.

Figure 2. Model of Prediction of Child Soldier Recruitment by Armed Groups



The importance of armed groups' popularity for the outcome of child soldier recruitment is demonstrated on Figure 2, where I outline schematically how the concept of *popularity* fits into my previous explanatory framework of supply and demand for adult and underage soldiers. In this visual representation of the logical path leading from my explanatory factors to the probability of insurgents' child soldier recruitment, *P(CS)*, armed groups' popularity performs several important functions. First, as can be seen from Figure 2, the degree of a group's popularity (high or low) is pivotal for the supply of combatants in general. In the context of externally driven demand for fighters, therefore, popularity helps determine if an insurgency will find itself in excess demand or supply situation. Second, group popularity further conditions whether its leaders have a strategic option to compensate their fighters directly, contingent on the insurgency's access to material resources. Third, a group's popularity determines if and how the demand for combatants in general will transfer into the demand for child soldiers specifically. Fourth, popularity of an armed group might further shape children's preferences to join the insurgency, which in turn influences the availability of minors for enlistment or conscription. Below I review the logic behind different effects of my proposed four factors on child soldier recruitment in cases of popular and unpopular armed groups.

Intensity of Armed Struggle. All other things being equal, *popular* armed groups are more likely to meet the demand for combatants than unpopular ones, as more people would join popular insurgencies voluntarily. However, even high mobilization of soldiers for popular military organizations might not necessarily meet its externally driven demand for fighters. Similarly, while low mobilization of personnel for *unpopular* groups reduces their chances to meet the existing demand for soldiers, sometimes even a small number of recruits may suffice to achieve the objectives of the rebels' military campaign. In addition, as I outlined above, the lack of ideational supporters can be compensated by the personnel attracted by pecuniary incentives. Still, popular insurgencies might have the advantage of a larger pool of readily available adult recruits. Thus, I propose the following Hypothesis 1.1: *Armed groups, especially unpopular ones, are more likely to recruit children if their fighting capacity is high.*

Material Rewards for Adults to Join. There is a reason to believe that popular and unpopular military organizations vary in their constraints to entice adult combatants by financial incentives. In the case of *popular* armed groups, for example, this practice is less likely to establish itself, as insurgents might have difficulty to retain both compensated and non-compensated soldiers in their ranks at the same time. This is because even most loyal supporters would question their unpaid participation and would demand similar payments that the movement's newcomers are receiving. Yet, to sustain the insurgency entirely and solely on material rewards might be an unlikely prospect for a popular armed group organized around

ideational incentives to begin with.[405] On the contrary, *unpopular groups* that do not have an inflow of members on ideological motives in the first place, might and most likely will exploit the option of introducing material rewards to reach adult fighters who otherwise would not join the rebels. Such a provision of pecuniary incentives should be negatively correlated with child soldiering. I propose the following Hypothesis 2.1: *Unpopular armed groups with higher material capacity (access to natural resources, diaspora support or/and third state support) are less likely to have children in their ranks.*

Legitimacy and Insecure Environments. Popularity of an armed group determines whether there is a cost associated with rebels' conscription or enlistment of minors. Forced recruitment of adults or recruitment of children by any method for a *popular* armed group are both deemed to undermine the insurgents' popularity and, as a result, further diminish their existing ability to attract committed volunteers. Even voluntary enlistment of children who are quite likely to express a willingness to join a *popular* insurgency might not be greeted with much appreciation from the armed group's constituency or civilian population in general. Contrary to popular military organizations, *unpopular* armed groups do have an opportunity to consider forced recruitment of children, because this practice is quite unlikely to undermine their legitimacy, as the popularity of such groups is already low. Therefore, while unpopular groups will not hesitate to recruit children, contingent on the demand for them and their abundant supply, popular groups are restricted in their choice to enlist minors. However, when the popular armed groups operate in the extremely insecure environments, they might have this restriction uplifted by their supporters. Therefore, the factor of ethnic persecution that I propose to influence the recruitment of children by armed groups, should be prominent only in the case of popular armed groups, not the unpopular ones. Thus, Hypothesis 3.1 reads as follows: *Popular armed groups that operate in conflicts with ethnic persecution are more likely to have children.*

Access to People. In the case of *popular* armed groups, a certain amount of children will always be willing to join either for ideological reasons or feelings of insecurity, as has been discussed above. *Unpopular* groups, on the contrary, would tend to have more difficulty in scooping children who, similarly to adults, would not want to join such insurgents. Therefore, access to people should have a larger effect on child recruitment in case of *unpopular* armed groups. Thus, Hypothesis 4.1 postulates*: Unpopular armed groups with access to larger territories are more likely to recruit children.*

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In sum, in case of popular armed groups the factors from Set A Conditions (Figure 2) prevail in explaining the probability of an armed group to recruit child soldiers. More specifically, the factors of

[405] Note that Weinstein argues that availability of material resources will crowd out the ideational element as time goes by (Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion*, p. 52). At the same time, Andvig and Gates suggest that this is "unlikely to occur" in the situations of excess supply of combatants. In the absence of any formal test for Weinstein's point, I will not consider the potential crowding out of ideational endowments in my model.

ethnic persecution and, less so, *fighting capacity* are proposed to be the major determinants of child recruitment in case of *popular* armed groups. In case of *unpopular* movements, however, the factors from Set B Conditions will be more important in predicting insurgents' behavior in relation to child soldiering. These factors include *fighting capacity*, *material capacity*, and *access to people*. Therefore, with the likely exception of *fighting capacity*, I should expect that the factors of *ethnic persecution*, *material capacity*, and *access to people* have different effect sizes on child soldier recruitment for popular and unpopular armed groups.

Section 3. Alternative Theoretical Approaches to the Study of Child Recruitment

In this section I review the approaches and predictions of three prominent theoretical studies of the child soldier phenomenon. These works model groups' decisions to recruit children as well as children's decisions to enlist into military organizations. Only one of these papers approached the problem of child recruitment by examining the interaction of both armed group's demand for child combatants and the actual supply of children for recruitment in the contexts of both voluntary and forced recruitment.[406] The other two papers specialized in their focus on voluntary or forced methods of recruitment. They both held the demand for combatants as constant and high, and one of them applied a similar restrictive assumption of a constant ubiquitous supply of children. Below I offer a detailed discussion of these papers and outline how my theoretical approach is different from the ones I describe here.

1. Market Model of Supply and Demand. Andvig and Gates (2007) suggest that interacting forces of supply and demand for combatants create three potential market situations for theorizing about child recruitment: 1) *pure excess demand* (armed groups require more recruits than they can otherwise get); 2) *pure excess supply* (there are plenty of adults and children in the "recruitment area" available for enlistment or conscription); 3) *equilibrium* ("when supply and demand are in balance").[407] In each situation different types of factors will be affecting child soldier recruitment by an armed group, also depending on the exogenously given forced or voluntary recruitment strategy.

Andvig and Gates' approach helps organize our way of thinking about the types of situations armed groups find themselves in when they recruit children. At the same time, excess demand or supply market situations appear to be an end result of an interplay of a number of factors. Whereas one may be able to deduce from the circumstances under which children *were* recruited whether such an action corresponded to excess demand or supply, it would be very hard to measure the resulting degree of excess demand and supply and thus make necessary predictions about child recruitment, especially when Andvig and Gates

[406] Andvig and Gates, "Recruiting Children for Armed Conflict." There is one more work that theorized about child soldiering from both supply and demand perspective, but in the context of one variable of poverty. For a detailed discussion on how absolute and relative poverty levels across African regions might potentially affect demand for children specifically as well as supply of underage recruits please refer to Achvarina et. al., "Regional Poverty and Child Soldier Recruitment."

[407] Andvig and Gates, "Recruiting Children for Armed Conflict," pp. 14-16.

remain somewhat unclear about what specific factors affect demand for combatants and supply thereof. Thus, due to its intrinsically theoretical nature, Andvig and Gates' approach is not directly amenable to empirical analysis.

My argument is based on interaction of several key contextual factors and armed group characteristics that are directly observable and measurable, and thus allow me to test and support my argument with empirical evidence. In my base model of child recruitment explanation (Figure 1) I depart from identifying and specifying the factors that drive demand for and supply of combatants, rather than starting with the given market combinations of excess demand and excess supply of child soldiers. The popularity characteristic of armed groups in my extended model (Figure 2) further classifies the ways in which the forces of demand for fighters and supply of children can lead to child soldier recruitment. Besides offering a theoretical framework that presents a hierarchical testable argument, there are three other advantages of such an approach.

First, unlike Andvig and Gates' theoretical classification, my framework permits predictions about forced and voluntary recruitment. Thus, the method of recruitment in my model is not an exogenous unexplained decision of an armed group, but is rather derived from my extended explanatory framework (Figure 2) itself as an outcome of constraints that the armed groups' characteristic of popularity imposes on them.[408] Second, my model is operationalizable for empirical testing in the sense that it allows for all the child recruitment explanatory factors that I propose to be included into a single empirical model to be estimated, which seems to be problematic in the case of Andvig and Gates' formulation. Third, my research design allows me to incorporate norms into my framework as a part of armed groups' characteristics. Specifically, I assume that domestic political legitimacy is embedded in popularity of an armed group which in turn is an interactive variable in my extended argument.

2. Model of forced recruitment. The work by Beber and Blattman (2008) builds on the conclusions of a survey-based study of Blattman (2006) which found that rebels of the LRA in Northern Uganda were abducting young adolescents for their guerrilla skills perceived as more effective than younger children, and their ease of indoctrination and disorientation compared to adults.[409] These findings were further cast by Beber and Blattman into "a principal-agent model that incorporates punishments, indoctrination, and age-specific productivity."[410] This model predicts that forced child recruitment by a rational armed group is more likely to occur 1) "when punishment and supervision are cheap"; 2) "when rebel leaders are resource constrained" (in terms of both material and social endowments); 3) when "child's opportunities

[408] Unfortunately, my current study does not test the probability of forced or voluntary recruitment of children, as the disaggregated data for child recruitment method across African insurgencies is still under compilation for my next project. However, even prior to data disaggregation being able to predict forced or voluntary situation of recruitment allows us to identify specific factors that will affect child recruitment in these two different situations.
[409] Blattman, "Causes of Child Soldiering"; Beber and Blattman, "The Industrial Organization of Rebellion."
[410] Beber and Blattman, "The Industrial Organization of Rebellion," p. 4.

are poor relative to young adults"; and 4) when "indoctrination and disorientation are eased by poor information and education."[411]

Overall, the model suggested by Beber and Blattman generates three factors, all of which also appear in my explanatory model of child recruitment. First, they have a factor similar to my variable of armed group's *popularity*. For example, Beber and Blattman refer to the cheap punishment situation as the one characterized by "few economic or social penalties" to an armed group for engaging in forced recruitment, thus indirectly referring to the concept of *popularity*, or approval by a certain segment in a population, as defined in my explanatory framework.[412] In their second proposition they also identify armed groups that are constrained in social endowments – *unpopular* in my definition – as having a certain effect on child recruitment. The immediate difference between Beber and Blattman's and my model in regard to this particular factor of insurgents' *popularity* lies in its different explanatory power of child soldier recruitment. They claim that "rebel groups seeking international support, or local civilian loyalty, are unlikely to employ child abduction."[413] My argument, however, does not suggest that it is a crucial factor in explaining child soldier recruitment practice across armed groups. In my model, armed groups' popularity enters only as a conditioning variable that determines the magnitude of other variables' effects on the dependent variable of *child recruitment*. The conditionality, or in other words the interactive role, as opposed to crucial importance of armed group's popularity is reflected in the results of my data analysis presented in Chapter 5 on the empirical results. As one particular example of my findings, the variable of *mobilization capacity* that stands for armed group's popularity in my analysis, in itself did not exhibit a statistically significant effect on *child soldiering*.

Two other explanatory variables that appear in both Beber and Blattman's and my explanatory frameworks are the factors of *material capacity* and *poverty*. For example, as the second proposition of Beber and Blattman's model suggests, armed groups constrained in *material resources* (and especially the ones that are also constrained in social endowments) are more likely to recruit children. Similarly, their third and fourth propositions both suggest that *poverty* should have effect on child soldiering. As Beber and Blattman note elsewhere in their paper, even if absolute poverty might not be sufficient to represent relative opportunities of adults and children, absolute levels of a country's economic well-being might be a useful predictor of the overall state of education in the country.[414] Despite the overlap in regard to these

[411] Ibid., p. 4.
[412] Ibid., p. 22.
[413] Ibid., p. 22.
[414] Relative opportunities of children and adults are hard to conceptualize, measure, and test across armed groups in a large-*N* study. In the situations of voluntary recruitment, for example, Andvig and Gates mentioned poor prospects of land ownership for children with a potential increase in land scarcity as one source of opportunity inequality between adult land owners and children entering the land market (Andvig and Gates, "Recruiting Children for Armed Conflict," p. 9). Loss of traditional access to marriage was also named as a source of grievance held by the

two factors, and the variable of insurgents' popularity albeit used in different ways, our models stand apart in their different specification, focus, and hence different explanatory power of the child recruitment phenomenon. Beber and Blatman's model aims to explain only forced recruitment of rebels, and thus cannot address the more general question of why some armed groups recruit children and others do not that I pose here.

To demonstrate the poor explanatory power of Beber and Blattman's model, I briefly show the empirical results of running their model on my dataset of 112 African armed groups. Logistic regression on *child soldier recruitment* dummy variable shows that only the *poverty* factor has a significant effect, with the *popularity* variable being insignificant, and *material capacity* having a significant but the opposite sign to what Beber and Blattman proposed. The explanatory power statistic of such a model (Pseudo R^2) is very low (0.08). When I add control variables of *conflict intensity*, *duration* and *timing*, as I do in my model later on in this dissertation, all the explanatory factors specified in Beber and Blattman's theory score insignificant. Hence, the factors from their model could not predict (neither individually nor cumulatively) the child recruitment practices of 112 African armed groups in my sample. The performance of my model, meanwhile, is significantly better, as I show in Chapter 5.

When the sample of all African armed groups is reduced to the unpopular ones, we would expect Beber and Blattman's model to have a better performance, because it was designed for forced recruitment. As such, it should be better applied to groups with low popularity and punishment costs. However, even in this case, the model's poor predictive power does not improve. Thus, in the logistic regression on this reduced sample even *poverty* loses its significance. Alternatively, if in my sample we look only at the unpopular armed groups which also happened to have low material capacity, according to Beber and Blattman's model there should be a prevalence of insurgents who recruit children. Contrary to this expectation, however, out of 11 of such insurgencies only one armed group happens to be recruiting children. Ironically, this armed group is the LRA from Northern Uganda – the outlier in my sample on which Beber and Blattman based their theory.

Below I present a table of these 11 unpopular armed groups with material resource constraints. For the purpose of comparison of Beber and Blatman's model with mine, in the last two columns of the table I include two variables from my model, namely *fighting capacity* and *territorial access*. These were proposed in my explanatory framework to have an effect on child soldier recruitment in the case of

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older children and youth in some African countries against the adults (Andvig and Gates, "Recruiting Children for Armed Conflict," p. 11, citing Richards, *Fighting for the Rainforest*). All these inequalities between adults and children are rather difficult to measure across different countries, especially because they vary across regions and communities within the countries. As to the forced recruitment situations, which Beber and Blattman claim to model, the pre-entry characteristics of children such as their family household poverty levels proved to be non-deterministic for recruitment, according to the previous study by Blattman (Blattman, "The Causes of Child Soldiering," pp. 2, 14).

unpopular armed groups, besides *material capacity*. As can be seen from this table, in seven armed groups out of ten for which child recruitment was not reported, the *fighting capacity* that is proposed in my explanatory framework to generate the demand for combatants was found to be low. In other words, even if armed groups are unpopular with no material support and lack voluntary enlistment of adults, they might not necessarily resort to child recruitment practice if their leadership pursues less ambitious goals or if these objectives can be reached without the need to recruit additional fighters. The latter could be a result of a certain warfare strategy employed by military organizations or simply a consequence of poor resistance from the opponent.[415] The framework of Beber and Blattman, however, despite its focus on modeling armed groups' decision, omits this important contextual factor of *fighting capacity* that is shown here to generate demand for combatants. Conversely, the demand for soldiers in their study is treated as given, with adverse consequences for their model's predictive power.

Table 3. Unpopular African Armed Groups without Material Resources

Country	*Armed Group*	*Formation*	*Dissolution*	*Child Recruitment*	*Fighting Capacity*	*Territorial Access*
Ethiopia	EPRP	01.01.1977	5.28.1991	0	0	1
Ethiopia	EPDM	01.01.1980	5.28.1991	0	0	0
Somalia	USC	01.01.1989	1.29.1991	0	1	0
Somalia	SSDF	01.01.1980	12.31.1991	0	0	0
Somalia	SPM	01.01.1989	12.31.1991	0	1	0
Uganda	WNBF	05.01.1996	12.31.1996	0	0	1
Uganda	UPDA	04.01.1986	12.31.1990	0	1	0
Uganda	LRA	08.08.2001	07.01.2006	1	1	1
Uganda	UPA	12.03.1987	12.31.1991	0	0	1
Uganda	UDCM/UPDCA	12.31.1990	12.31.1991	0	0	0
Uganda	UPDA	5.30.1989	12.31.1990	0	0	0

Table 3 shows yet another interesting point. Notice that in all three cases of the non-recruiting armed groups with high *fighting capacity*, or with high demand for combatants according to my argument, *territorial access* is low. Thus, *territorial access* is yet another important explanatory factor that my model incorporates, unlike the Beber and Blattman's. This is because my argument, in contrast to theirs, goes beyond the decision of an armed group to recruit children, as I consider that such a verdict does not automatically transform itself into practice, as physical capturing of children might further depend on other factors. Beber and Blattman assume the supply of children to be constant or in excess and hence naturally omit contextual factors such as *territorial access*.[416] This assumption certainly makes sense in case of the LRA, on which their inductively driven theory is based. The situation of Northern Uganda was quite unusual in the sense that people in the Acholi region did not migrate from the territories of LRA

[415] For instance, hit and run tactics of guerrilla war fighting do not require huge armies as the struggles with conventional open air battles, and terrorist strikes require even less mobilization of fighters and suicide attackers.
[416] Beber and Blattman, "The Industrial Organization of Rebellion," p. 9.

operations.[417] Meanwhile, such an unrestricted access to civilians in proximity of rebel operations is not very common for armed groups in modern conflicts with massive flows of people vacating insecure areas as refugees or the internally displaced. Access to children for forcible recruitment may be far from easy for groups other than the LRA. Also note in this regard that in the situation of LRA, as Table 3 demonstrates, the group's high fighting capacity relative to the government and thus demand for combatants is coupled with high access to people (or territories, measured by the index of territorial control and access to neighboring countries). My argument controls for the availability of children for conscription by introducing the variable of the amount of territory to which an insurgency has access.[418]

3. Model of Voluntary Recruitment. The study by Gates (2004) offers yet another principal-agent model, this time predicting voluntary as opposed to forced recruitment of children.[419] According to this model, 1) recruits of a military organization (*the agents*) when mobilized on a voluntary basis, have to receive sufficient utility by joining the organization so that they do not desert (the participation constraint); and 2) the leadership (*the principal*) of an armed group "must be able to find a way to reward the soldiers so that they choose to act in a way that will produce the maximum increase of the probability of winning (or sustaining a "profitable" conflict) with the lowest financial costs (incentive compatibility constraint). Hence the leadership may employ children if they are sufficiently cheap to compensate for their (potentially) lower military efficiency."[420] Thus, the model predicts that more children will be recruited in the situations of voluntary conscription if 1) "their military efficiency increases relative to adults"; 2) "children's income possibilities outside the organization decline compared to the adults' outside options"; 3) "the relative cost of monitoring children compared to adults decreases."[421]

There are several differences between my model and the framework of Gates (2004). First, his model is quite general, which has its appeal and applicability to many voluntary recruitment contexts. At the

[417] This was a result of government campaign that put civilians into the so-called internal displacement camps in the same region under the alleged protection of an army. While the government forces did not provide safety for the ubiquitous abduction attacks of the LRA, they also made people to consider staying in the region rather than becoming internally displaced throughout the safe regions in the country. Moving as refugees into Sudan was also not an option for citizens of Northern Uganda as the conflict in the Southern Sudan, coupled with the LRA hiding bases there, made that region particularly insecure.

[418] Again, a somewhat similar conclusion of Beber and Blattman that "as rebel groups move into territory distant in spatial or social terms from their support base, however, we should see a greater likelihood of coercion" makes perfect sense but can be constrained in reality by the factors of availability of civilians in those new territories as well as the high level of demand for soldiers in the first place, which is not automatic from the fact that a group is unpopular and does not possess material resources (Beber and Blattman, "The Industrial Organization of Rebellion," p. 22).

[419] Gates, "Recruiting Child Soldiers."

[420] Ibid.

[421] Andvig and Gates, "Recruiting Children for Armed Conflict," p. 9. The third prediction is based on the assumption that even in the situations of voluntary recruitment a group will face certain level of desertion. Thus, Gates implies that if, for example, "the fighting is moving further away from the soldier's homestead" children will experience lower geographical mobility than adults and thus will require lower cost of supervision than adults.

same time, however, the paper itself does not offer testable operationalizations of many concepts employed in the model. For example, it remains unclear in what situations the military efficiency of children from the first proposition above will increase relative to adults and, consequently, how to measure it. Meanwhile, my model offers an empirical, albeit indirect, test of military efficiency of children where it is actually specified. Thus, my measurement of demand for combatants with groups' *fighting capacity* might, at the same time, express the demand for child soldiers specifically, based on their relative military effectiveness in this particular situation. Since *fighting capacity* increases the chances of conventional warfare, not only does it require more personnel but specifically children to perform the roles of foot soldiers in which minors might be better than adults.[422] What is also important here is that I expect this characteristic of military effectiveness of children to matter only in the forced recruitment situations, not voluntary ones modeled by Gates. As mentioned above, voluntary recruitment of children for the roles associated with high mortality rates seems to be negatively associated with the legitimacy of popular groups among their civilian support base. As expected, the variable of fighting capacity proved to have larger effect in the case of unpopular armed groups, not popular ones, as I show in Chapter 5 on the empirical results. Thus, when the general predictions of Gates' model actually are operationalized in a specific way, it turns out that they may lose their predicted explanatory power outlined in his general theoretical model.

The second difference of my explanatory framework from Gates is that he models voluntary recruitment only, which in turn is based on the concept of rewards. Meanwhile, recruitment of children can occur in its forced form, upon which prediction two of Gates' model, as much as it relates to the decisions of children, becomes irrelevant. More specifically, relative inequality in adults' and children's outside possibilities might not matter for forced recruitment, as the study of Blattman demonstrated in the case of the LRA.[423] In addition, arguably, the relative gap between child and adult outside options may get more or less erased following the destruction inflicted by an armed conflict affecting everyone by insecurity, devastation, food shortages, and displacement.

The third prediction of Gates' model in itself points to the third difference between our models. Unlike Gates, in my explanatory framework I do not consider the factor of child monitoring to affect the decision of armed groups and thus child recruitment variation. This is because I believe that a cost of monitoring does not vary much (if at all) across different contexts. As Blattman's study demonstrated, the monitoring of children is cheaper because they are more easily indoctrinated and disoriented. Meanwhile,

[422] High need for children as foot soldiers in conventional battles does not necessarily undermine the need for adults as conventional warfare also requires high logistical, communicational, and intelligence skills that only adults may perform.
[423] Blattman, "The Causes of Child Soldiering," pp. 14, 21. For more discussion of this point refer to the section on poverty in Chapter 2 of this dissertation.

the gullibility of children to indoctrination and the price of introducing an ideological propaganda for children within armed groups do not necessarily vary across different countries, conflicts, or military organizations. Disorientation, however, which I believe to be the only other potential characteristic of substance related to monitoring costs, can vary across armed groups, as it is related to the geography of insurgent operations. As both Gates and Blattman suggest, the proximity to home while stationed with armed groups is positively correlated with the monitoring costs.[424] At the same time, in my own survey of Liberian former child soldiers I did not identify any absence of knowledge about the location at which they were stationed. Similarly, the crucial factor behind their decisions to stay with armed groups had nothing to do with disorientation but rather with the absence of a place to return to, as their home villages were raided, abandoned, or burnt, and people from there killed or displaced. Therefore, I am not convinced that the cost of monitoring children from Gates' model can be a crucial explanation of the child soldier recruitment practice by armed groups.

Last but not the least, there is yet another important difference between Gates' and my model. It is the issue of constraint that popular armed groups, in particular, have in relation to the cost imposed upon their legitimacy as a result of their admission of child volunteers. Thus, all three predictions of Gates' model in my framework are subject to additional conditioning factor of the armed groups' popularity. I argue that an armed group will not resort to enlistment of children, even with all the factors offered by Gates' model being present, if the insurgents' legitimacy is compromised by recruiting minors. The latter restriction should hold universally for popular armed groups, unless children's absolute (rather than relative) outside options are regarded as dire by the public – the situations that are also accounted for in my model by the variable of *ethnic persecution*. While it is unclear whether poverty of a child might justify his or her recruitment into an armed group in the eyes of civilian populations, in the context of ongoing ethnic cleansing in the country, acceptance of children into armed groups for actual or alleged defense purposes might not adversely affect the domestic legitimacy of insurgents.

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After reviewing these three theoretical papers, the most crucial differences between my explanatory framework and their models aimed at explaining child soldier recruitment are summarized below. Unlike the model of Andvig and Gates, my argument does not treat the market situations of demand for and supply of combatants as given, but rather predicts their outcome. Starting from that point, my model, unlike Andvig and Gates', offers structured and operationalizable propositions amenable to testing and empirical verification. It also allows one to predict and specify with the data the situations of forced and voluntary recruitment of child soldiers, as opposed to treating them as exogenously given. The most important distinction of my model from Beber and Blattman's is that mine offers a richer specification

[424] Beber and Blattman, "The Industrial Organization of Rebellion," p. 22; Gates, "Recruitment and Allegiance."

and a much better predictive power. As to the model of voluntary recruitment of minors suggested by Gates, its major drawback in comparison to my explanatory framework is in its focus on rewards to recruits and benefits for recruiters only and, as a result, the omission of the concept of punishment and costs to a military organization incurred by child recruitment practice. Therefore, despite the significant contribution of all these highly informative three theoretical papers to our knowledge about child recruitment, I believe that my model has a better predictive power in answering the question of why some armed groups recruit children whereas others do not.

Section 4. Alternative Explanations

Poverty. As has been outlined in detail in Chapter 2 on literature review, poverty should matter for both voluntary and forced recruitment of children alike at least to some extent. In the case of voluntary enlistment of minors, it acts as a force that determines the value of the outside options for children.[425] Thus, in poorer countries or county regions, child soldiering, similarly to child labor, becomes a more viable and profitable option than other alternatives. Poor communities are also less capable to defend themselves against forced recruitment due to low military capability, information capacity, mobility, and priority of protection by government forces. Hypothesis 5 is, therefore, specified as follows*: Armed groups operating in poorer regions are more likely to have recruitment of children.*

Time of Conflict. In Chapter 2 on literature review, I showed that the claim about child soldiers being unique to new wars of today can easily be refuted with numerous counterexamples. At the same time, it does appear that in the past child soldier practice was not as widespread as in the conflicts of today. This trend is confirmed in my sample of 112 African insurgencies where a statistically significant difference can be discerned between the mean year of conflict onsets for the armed groups that recruited child soldiers and those who did not, with the latter having a lower value.[426]

Overall, I would argue, the variable of *conflict timing* does not add anything new to my argument from the point of theory. What the time dimension might capture, however, is the corresponding change in the values of my predictor variables of child soldiering over time. All four of my independent variables (*fighting capacity*, *material capacity, ethnic persecution* and *territorial access*) were found to increase in their values over time.[427] Therefore, I include the variable of *conflict timing* into my analysis as a control

[425] If measured accordingly, poverty might account for the pre-war levels of education and employment opportunities in a country – one of the alternative explanatory factors offered in the literature to affect children's decisions to join. Thus, in richer countries or regions, families can more readily afford education of children and enjoy better economic opportunities in terms of employment.

[426] African armed groups recruiting children did seem to appear in newer wars (mean conflict onset year of 1994) than non-recruiters (mean conflict onset year of 1991).

[427] For example, the mean value for the variable of *fighting capacity* for armed groups that operated after 1997 was 0.49 – an increase by 20% from the mean of 0.41 for groups that ceased to exist prior to 1997. Similarly, the mean values of the variable *territory control* by unpopular groups rose from 0.71 to 0.91. *Ethnic persecution* values also

variable to account for conflict epoch and avoid the potential endogeneity problem.[428] Hypothesis 6: *More contemporary armed groups are more likely to have recruitment of children.*

Conflict Duration. As I established in Chapter 2 on literature review, there is no apparent theoretical or empirical justification for inclusion of this factor into my model. However, there is one methodological reason for controlling for this factor in empirical work. It can be argued that some of the variables in my argument – namely *material capacity* and *mobilization capacity* – are not time-invariant. For example, a group's reliance on pecuniary rewards (at least for those groups that have access to the otherwise fixed material endowments) may intensify with time as groups may become more eager to resort to material incentives to replenish the diminishing supply of adults. Similarly, the overall popularity of a group, expressed as the presence or absence of potential supporters in relatively large numbers, might falter with time as the war gets protracted. Therefore, including the variable of *conflict duration* into the analysis as a control for groups' longevity helps alleviate potential endogeneity problem caused by omitted variable bias. Therefore, Hypothesis 7 is stated as follows*: Insurgencies that participate in armed struggles for a longer time are more likely to recruit children.*

Conflict Intensity. Elsewhere in the text I explained potential methodological flaws of using traditional operationalization of conflict intensity based on battle deaths. At the same time, unlike my variable of *fighting capacity*, the battle-related concept is based on direct casualty counting, albeit imperfect one. Moreover, a continuous variable of *conflict intensity* represented by battle deaths was found to be a good predictor of regional child soldier recruitment in my previous coauthored work.[429] Therefore, in addition to my own variable of *fighting capacity* that represents the concept of potential severity of armed struggle and battle casualties, I also include into my analysis the control variable of *conflict intensity* which is based on traditional concept of battle deaths. Hypothesis 8 then reads: *Armed groups engaging in conflicts with higher battle deaths are more likely to resort to child recruitment.*

Orphans. Bearing in mind the mixed evidence for the 'orphans argument' suggested in Chapter 2 on literature review, I would like to subject this alternative explanation to yet another test. It is difficult to obtain direct and precise data on the orphan rates in different 112 African conflict dyads in my sample. Therefore, in my large-*N* analysis I treat orphaning as a special case within the outcomes of *ethnic persecution* in a country. The following example is used to justify this alternative way of looking at orphaning when examining cross-group variation in child soldier recruitment. Thus, in the DRC, the

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increased in case of popular groups from the mean of 0.24 to 0.48 for pre-1997 and post-1997 groups respectively. The variable of *material compensation* also increased over time, from 0.66 to 0.85.

[428] For further discussion on potential endogeneity problem refer to Chapter 5 of this dissertation.

[429] Achvarina et. al., "Regional Poverty and Child Soldier Recruitment," pp. 17-18. In this work we also tested different specifications of *conflict intensity* variable by using 1) numbers of battle related deaths and 2) dummies for low intensity conflicts (never reaching 1,000 battle deaths in any year) and high intensity conflicts (that reach 1,000 battle deaths in at least one of the conflict years) using no conflict as a reference category. The results were similar.

Uganda People's Defense Force (UPDF) was reported to train "hundreds of recruits from the Hema and Lendu ethnic groups at RCD-ML [Congolese Rally for Democracy-Liberation Movement] camps in Beni and Bunia. Lendu children, often orphaned by interethnic killing, provide easy targets."[430] The incidence of orphaning might also be embedded in the control variable of *conflict intensity* measured in battle-related deaths, which might reflect the potential scope of orphaning.

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My explanatory framework, which is based on the interaction of supply and demand factors affecting the outcome of insurgents' decisions and practice with regard to child recruitment, generated the following four major propositions:

1) Armed groups in conflicts with intense armed struggle are more likely to recruit children;
2) Insurgencies that offer material rewards to their fighters are less likely to recruit children;
3) Armed movements operating in extremely insecure environments are more likely to enlist children;
4) Armed groups with access to larger territories are more likely to recruit children.

In addition, when structured around the concept of armed groups' popularity as in the proposed extension, this explanatory framework suggests higher relevance of some of these hypotheses for popular and unpopular armed groups:

1.1) Unpopular groups in conflicts with intense armed struggle are more likely to recruit children;
2.1) Unpopular groups that offer material rewards to their fighters are less likely to recruit children;
3.1) Popular groups operating in extremely insecure environments are more likely to enlist children;
4.1) Unpopular armed groups with access to larger territories are more likely to recruit children.

The empirical ambiguity or lack of any systematic examination of existing explanations in the literature offers some partial theoretical justification for inclusion of several alternative factors into my model. Their potential effects on child soldiering are summarized in the following hypotheses:

5) Armed groups operating in poorer regions are more likely to have recruitment of children;
6) More contemporary armed groups are more likely to have recruitment of children;
7) Rebels that participate in armed struggles for a longer time are more likely to recruit children;
8) Armed groups engaging in conflicts with higher battle deaths are more likely to recruit children.

I subject these propositions to a series of quantitative and qualitative tests, which I describe in the following chapter on methodology.

[430] Amnesty International, "Child Recruitment in the Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo," April 2001, cited in CSUCS, *Child Soldiers 1379 Report*.

Chapter 4: Methodology

My 'deductive-nomological' explanatory model arrives at four potential causes of child soldier recruitment by armed groups.[431] At the same time, my theoretical framework also outlines causal mechanisms, or processes and pathways that link my proposed explanatory factors with the outcome of child soldier recruitment.[432] This dual nature of my model necessitates a combination of both quantitative and qualitative methods in order to offer a comprehensive test of my argument. Causal factors and their effects expressed in "the expected value of the change in outcome" are best estimated and verified using statistical methods, whereas the validity of causal mechanisms should be assessed by conducting case studies.[433] For statistical tests and case study analyses I employ methods designed to complement each other while offering different dimensions to validation of my model.

I first conduct large-*N* analysis based on statistical methods designed to test the existence of additive and interactive relationships, as both are proposed in my argument. The effects of my explanatory factors are further assessed by calculating marginal effects of variables and their interactions. After applying the empirical test to my argument, I proceed to the case study analyses. This sequencing of qualitative approach after quantitative test is dictated by the utility of each method. In situations when case study analysis is employed for theory testing, as in my dissertation, it is important first to develop a solid theoretical justification for causation based on either deductive logic or some existing empirical justification.[434] By offering both deductive explanatory framework and the supporting large-*N* test prior to the case study analysis I therefore aim to maximize the benefits of the latter method.

My qualitative test of the argument employs three different case study techniques. I start with utilizing a congruence method in conducting a controlled comparative case study analysis of child recruitment by the five Liberian armed groups that took part in hostilities of the first Liberian Civil War

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[431] 'Deductive-nomological' type of explanatory framework is defined in Alexander George and Andrew Bennet as involving "explanations via reference to law-like statements of regularity" (Alexander George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Science* (Cambridge University Press: Massachusetts, 2005), p. 128).

[432] A concise definition of *causal mechanism* is offered in Daniel Little: "a series of events, governed by lawlike regularities, leading from the explanans to the explanandum" (Daniel Little, *Varieties of Social Explanation: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Social Science* (Westview Press, 1991), p. 15). For a slightly more sophisticated definition of the concept refer to Alexander George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies*, p. 137.

[433] For a further discussion on comparative advantages of quantitative and qualitative methods refer to George and Bennett, *Case Studies*, pp. 138-139. On utility and necessity of combining quantitative and qualitative research in the social science field see, among others, Sidney Tarrow, "Bridging the Quantitative-Qualitative Divide" in Henry Brady and David Collier, eds., *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2004), pp. 171-179. George and Bennett also put emphasis on "combining within-case and comparative analysis" as well as "on multi-method research more generally" (George and Bennett, *Case Studies*, p. 147, footnote). Likewise, Daniel Little suggests that "in order to distinguish causal from accidental accounts, process-tracing should be combined with comparative or statistical study of multiple cases" (Daniel Little, *Microfoundations, Method, and Causation: On the Philosophy of the Social Sciences* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1998), pp. 211-213, cited in George and Bennett, *Case Studies*, p. 147, footnote 47).

[434] George and Bennett, *Case Studies*, p. 184.

of 1989-1996. I then perform a temporal case study of underage recruitment on one of these Liberian groups – the NPFL – and implement process-tracing. To assess the generalizability of my argument, I also run a plausibility probe of my explanatory framework on several synthetic case studies outside Africa.

I proceed with outlining my methodology as follows. I first describe in Section 1 the data and sample for my large-*N* study, as well as offer a justification for choosing the Liberian conflict and its five armed groups for a comparative case study. I also describe the survey data that I have compiled and utilized in the temporal case study. In Section 2, I show how I measure my dependent, independent, conditioning, and control variables for the large-*N* analysis and case studies. In Section 3, I introduce the statistical methods which I choose for the large-*N* analysis. Section 4 describes the three case study approaches I employ along with the methods of controlled comparison, congruence, temporal examination and process-tracing.

Section 1. Data and Samples for Analyses

Data and Sample for Large-*N* Cross-Sectional Analysis

I conduct statistical analysis on the new dataset that I compiled myself for the purposes of this dissertation. My sample consists of 111 African insurgency movements that took part in armed struggle against their governments and were active some time between 1980 and the present. The unit of observation in my dataset is a conflict dyad between a government and a rebel group.[435] The dyads were taken from the Non-State Actor Dataset (hereafter referred as the NSA Dataset) – the supplement to the Uppsala Armed Conflict Dataset.[436] The NSA Dataset features major characteristics of armed groups in conflict dyads between specific state and each insurgency group that challenged it between 1945 and 2003. I reduced the NSA Dataset to African dyads only and then excluded all the dyads that ceased to exist prior to 1980, as reporting on child soldiers before that time was problematic to obtain.[437] I also removed all *coup d'etats* as I do not examine this type of armed violence in relation to child soldiering.[438] Three major conflict types remaining in my sample are secessionist, ethnic and civil war.

Cases for Case Study Analysis

Selection of the Liberian Conflict for the Case Study Analysis. For my case study analysis I chose to examine in detail the first civil war in Liberia (1989-1996) and armed factions that took part in it. This particular Liberian armed struggle can be viewed as a representative case of modern African wars for several reasons. First, it lasted for seven years – a *conflict duration* that approximates the mean (7.1 years)

[435] Note that the unit of analysis in my study is a rebel group.
[436] David E. Cunningham, Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, "The NSA Project: A Non-State Actor Supplement to the Uppsala Armed Conflict Data." This dataset was provided to me as a courtesy and good will of Kristian and David, for which I am eternally grateful. For more information about the dataset please contact its authors.
[437] There were only nine pre-1980 African conflict dyads recorded in the original dataset and they were deleted from the sample.
[438] I excluded 23 *coup d'etats* – four that occurred prior to 1980 and 19 that took place afterwards.

and the median (7.0 years) of other 27 sub-Saharan civil wars that occurred between 1960 and 1999.[439] Second, the *intensity* of this Liberian conflict approximates the average of all other conflicts in my sample. With the values of 1 for 'minor conflict' and 2 for a 'full scale war' assigned to each year in conflict dyads of the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Database, the Liberian war on average had the intensity of 1.29, with some years being more severe than others.[440] This is just slightly lower than the conflict intensity average of 1.34 for all the conflicts in my large-*N* dataset. Third, the Liberian conflict type was recorded both in Uppsala/PRIO Dataset and the NSA Database as a *civil strife* as opposed to secessionist movement or ethnic struggle.[441] Correspondingly, 48% of all world conflicts and 64% of all sub-Saharan conflicts between 1945 and 1999 were civil wars.[442] Fourth, *poverty level* in Liberia prior to the conflict was recorded to be below the mean of all African countries where armed violence occurred – that is where 67% of all conflict dyads in my sample fell.[443] Thus, with its values of conflict duration, intensity, type, as well as country's economic well-being, Liberia's first civil war is closely comparable with an average African conflict.

Selection of Five Armed Groups in Liberia for the Case Study Analysis. In my first case study analysis I compare and contrast five Liberian armed groups that took part in hostilities during the first Liberian civil war of 1989-1996. These armed groups are: NPFL, INPFL, ULIMO-J, ULIMO-K, and LPC.[444] Why is it appropriate to select these five factions as comparative cases to test my argument and demonstrate the causal mechanisms behind it? There are at least two reasons for this. First, all five

[439] The mean and the median were calculated using James Fearon's replication dataset that was employed in his seminal work "Why Do Some Civil Wars Last Much Longer than Others?" *Journal of Peace Research* 41, no. 3 (2004): 275-301. The mean of 7.1 years was obtained after I deleted two outliers in the selected sub-sample of Sub-Saharan civil wars – those were extremely long-lasting civil strife conflicts that protracted for 35 and 25 years respectively. In the sample without these two outliers the shortest conflict lasted one year and the longest one 20 years. The mean calculated for the sample with all observations, including outliers, was 8.6 years.

[440] The calculation procedure for the *conflict intensity* index is described in this dissertation in Chapter 4 on methodology.

[441] These two datasets offer somewhat similar and yet distinct conflict typologies based on the concept of armed struggle purpose. Thus, the Uppsala/PRIO dataset classifies all conflict dyads into three categories depending on the type of incompatibility between the actors in the dyad: over 'territory', 'government', or 'government and territory'. The NSA Dataset reflects more on the goals of armed groups and as such distinguishes between the 'ethnic', 'secessionist', 'civil war', and '*coup d'état*' types of conflicts. Unlike in the Uppsala/PRIO dataset, these categories of the NSA Dataset are not mutually exclusive and "individual conflicts may be assigned more than one of these categories" (Cunningham and Gleditsch, "The NSA Project," p. 2).

[442] These percentages are coming from the summary statistics of the James Fearon's replication dataset mentioned above (James Fearon, "Why Do Some Civil Wars Last Much Longer than Others?"). According to Fearon, civil wars in his sample include only those cases where the aims of rebels were not ambiguous or mixed with other motifs, which means that in reality there were probably more civil wars than admitted by him for methodological clarity.

[443] On the measurement of poverty in my data sample refer to the section on operationalization of variables in Chapter 4 of this dissertation.

[444] This list does not include marginal factions that were participating in the Liberian conflict for a short period of time with low membership and for which most of the data on my variables were extremely difficult to find. Such factions include LDF (Lofa Defense Force), NDF (Nimba Defense Force), and the National Patriotic Front of Liberia Central Revolutionary Council (NPFL-CRC), a breakaway faction from the NPFL.

Liberian armed groups resemble the representative characteristics of other insurgencies in my large-*N* sample and, therefore, cannot be considered as outliers or too unique in type and character. Second, they share similarities among themselves on many attributes but the factors of interest – both dependent and independent variables – which makes their comparison with one another as case study observations justifiable and purposeful.

There are many similarities between the five Liberian armed groups and other African insurgencies. First, all five Liberian factions *emerged* between the years 1989-1993, and *ceased to exist* in 1996 (at least until the reappearance of some in 1997). Meanwhile, the average date of African insurgency formation in my dataset is 1992, and the sample's average for the date of groups' dissolution is 1997, which makes Liberian rebels representative of the rest of the sample. Second, the mean *rebel estimate* for the five Liberian factions was not far from the mean of 10,660 fighters in my sample of 111 African insurgencies. The five Liberian groups varied in their size from 3,500 to 15,000 combatants, with the values of 4,000, 8,000 and 9,000 in between.[445] Thus, in terms of group size the Liberian factions also do not constitute outliers in the sample of other insurgencies. The third very important similarity between the Liberian factions and other African insurgencies is in *the goals* of their military campaigns.[446] Ultimately, rebels in the first Liberian Civil War all fought for power representation and control over the country's natural resources, such as diamonds, iron, timber, and rubber. They all attempted to change the present ruling status quo, albeit with different ideas about new distribution of political stakes.[447] Meanwhile,

[445] These numbers represent the averages of low and high rebel estimates found in the following sources: Cunningham and Gleditsch, "The NSA Project"; David Harris, "From 'Warlord' to 'Democratic' President: How Charles Taylor Won the 1997 Liberian Elections," *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 37 (3), 1999, pp. 431-455; Andrew Young, "Costly Discrimination and Ethnic Conflict: The Case of the Liberian Civil Wars," Working Paper, 2008, p. 24).

[446] In general, it is difficult to identify the primary objectives of armed groups in militarized struggles, because proclaimed goals are not necessarily the ones that the groups' leadership pursues. The following extract from Andvig and Gates elaborates on this point: "The general problem is that professed motivations (and alleged motivations) do not necessarily coincide with "real" or ultimate motivations. This is a hermeneutic problem. Can we ever know whether *politics* or *religion* provides the fundamental motivation for groups in Chechnya or in the Middle East? Equally difficult is deciding whether *money* or *politics* provide the fundamental motivation for other groups, which finance their operations through lootable resources such as opium, cocaine or diamonds. Also difficult to determine is whether professed goals are for a broad public who are not members of the military group or for the group members themselves. As in other contexts, the actors may have good reasons for trying to misrepresent their goals (and those of their adversaries). Religion may be a pretext for politics, and politics a pretext for money" (Andvig and Gates, "Recruiting Children for Armed Conflict," p. 10).

[447] For example, the leader of the NPFL, Charles Taylor, fought for the country's center and his presidential control of it from the very beginning of the Liberian conflict. All other factions, with or without presidential ambitions, constantly in and out of alliances with one another as time went on, were fighting for establishing themselves in the new state administration, whether or not that meant ousting Charles Taylor from the power he strived for. This quest for control over sectors of the country's administration was not based solely on ideological grounds, if at all. The presidency or a post in the government was just the ultimate expression of "warlordism" in the context of the Liberian war, in which every armed group grasped control over commercial operations in diamonds, timber or rubber. Positioning themselves in the government administration meant for armed factions acquiring "political means to secure their interests that so far they secured using military channels" (Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, pp.

military organizations participating in the armed struggle for the state power, unlike secessionist or ethnic movements, constitute about 70% of all African insurgencies in my sample.

One of the advantages of comparing armed groups within the same armed struggle, as opposed to different conflicts, is that all militarized contestants share the same structural characteristics of the country and conflict. In this way, there is more control over external factors achieved in the comparative case study analysis.[448] For example, country poverty levels, culture and demographic characteristics are equal for all factions operating in the same conflict. These contextual variables may exhibit some regional variation, but unlike for armed groups from different conflicts, these regional deviations are kept within some bounded limits often determined by the general country values for the factors in question.[449] While the groups varied in the number and severity of armed events they participated in, it is the overall conflict intensity measured in battle deaths and representing country's devastation level that imposed the same consequences on all the factions. For example, as people were dying or fleeing from intense fighting, all five Liberian armed groups had similar shortages in manpower availability. Similarly, the country's overall destruction level generated more or less identical situation of food scarcity and collapse of basic infrastructure for all participants to the conflict. Other features are also controlled for by comparing groups from the same conflict. For instance, the fact that the five Liberian armed groups were active during the time span of 1989-1996, in the post-Cold War era, accounts for any major shifts related to differences in time epochs and makes the factions directly comparable to each other in the temporal sense.

Survey Data and Interviews for Case Studies and Micro-Level Analysis

My case study analysis utilizes the data from the survey which I conducted in Ghana in 2008 on former Liberians residing in the Buduburam refugee camp.[450] First, on the basis of this survey data I construct a longitudinal continuous measure of my dependent variable of *child soldiering* for a temporal case study. More specifically, I count the number of former child soldiers from my survey who were recruited into the NPFL faction for every year of the first Liberian conflict from 1989 to 1996. This variation in numbers of children conscripted or enlisted each year allows me to juxtapose the levels of these values with the relative values of my proposed independent variables, most of which I record from analysis of secondary sources. Second, in my cross-case comparison attempt, based on the data from the

106-107). Therefore, when gathered in Monrovia in 1995 they all disregarded the ceasefire and clashed for simultaneous presidency rallying and division of government posts.

[448] The issue of selection of case studies for the structured controlled comparison is discussed further in this chapter in the relevant section on the case study methodology.

[449] For example, poverty in Liberia's capital region and the country outskirts differed significantly, as in most of the world countries. As I mention later in the text, poverty in Liberia "has predominantly been a rural and peri-urban phenomenon" (Francis W. Nyepon, "Liberia: The Nucleus to Reducing Poverty," *The Perspective*, Atlanta, Georgia, Sept 6, 2007, http://www.liberiaitech.com/theperspective/2007/0906200703.html). Similarly, ethnic persecution was more prominent in some provinces but not others.

[450] The Buduburam Refugee Camp is located about 35 kilometers west from the capital of Ghana – Accra, in the Awutu-Effutu (Afutu)-Senya district of the Central region.

surveys and interviews with former child and adult members of these factions, I establish a specific variance of child recruitment across five Liberian armed groups.

Sample Selection. The Bududuram refugee camp represents a unique place for conducting surveys of Liberian citizens as it embodies the diversity of the country's population by hosting a mix of people who were affected by the civil war to a various degree in terms of time spent in the Liberian conflict and severity of experiences they went through. The 41,000 residents of the camp started arriving to refuge in relatively equal waves since 1990 from all geographic regions of Liberia of different ethnic heritage and cultures.[451] In the camp, I targeted three populations of Liberians for the survey and interviews: people who participated in armed conflict as children; people who did not end up with rebels while in Liberia during the war at young age under 18 years old; and people who served with belligerents in adulthood.

To find my informants I used a version of the "snowball" sampling.[452] I first established contact with three organizations representing former child soldiers and war-affected youth in the camp. I made an announcement about the survey to the leaders of the organizations as well as to their members during several meetings held by one of the organizations. The leadership of all three organizations also asked their members and acquaintances. After the first people were surveyed and interviewed, they were also asked by me and enumerators to send over other former child soldiers or non-conscripted youth that they might know. The leadership of the organizations, the enumerators and informants themselves were all requested to bring people who participated with Liberian armed factions at a young age.[453] However, to reduce any misunderstanding or potential deceit on the part of enumerators regarding the respondents' actual participation in armed groups, the former were also instructed to interview non-conscripted youth and adult soldiers if for some reason they had no luck in locating former child soldiers that day.[454] I also

[451] Camp population size comes from a 2005 record of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR, *Statistical Yearbook*, 2005, p. 345). The demographic diversity of the camp was the feature that camp residents and management sounded particularly proud about during my conversations with them. They also mentioned it as a proof that Liberians can live together in peace.

[452] Snowball sampling was used as a name for the so-called "chain-referral sampling methods that were first introduced by Coleman (1958)." "The basic idea behind these methods is that respondents are selected not from a sampling frame," or "a list of all members in the population," "but from the friendship network of existing members of the sample." "The sampling process begins when the researchers select a small number of seeds who are the first people to participate in the study. These seeds then recruit others to participate in the study. This process of existing sample members recruiting future sample members continues until the desired sample size is reached. Experience with chain-referral methods has shown them to be effective at penetrating hidden populations" (Matthew J. Salganik and Douglas D. Heckathorn, "Sampling and Estimation in Hidden Populations Using Respondent-Driven Sampling," *Sociological Methodology*, 2004, Vol. 34(1), pp. 193–239, at p. 196).

[453] It was not difficult for them to find former child soldiers whom they knew, especially in the initial stage of the survey.

[454] Before going into the field to survey informants after each meeting with me (typically at least once a day), they were supplied with two types of questionnaire forms – one for child soldiers and one for non-conscripted youth. I also employed other means to prevent potential cheating and falsification of the data. For example, I obliged the enumerators to bring all the informants to me after the completion of their survey and I went over most crucial questions on the questionnaire with each of them. By doing this I attempted to check if the person provided the same

identified some of the informants through meeting and talking to random people on the camp on the daily basis.

Potential Selection Bias. There are at least three potential problems with the selection of my sample, all related to its limited randomization. First, it might be argued that the residents of the camp outside Liberia can not truly represent the Liberian population if, for some reason, they exhibit a certain characteristic that made them or allowed them to leave the country during the war. However, as I show above, due to extreme diversity of its residents, the Bududuram refugee camp can be, in fact, even more representative of Liberian population than the residents in Liberia itself who might not necessarily have stayed in the country during the war and returned there from refuge in other countries but Ghana. Second, to ensure the randomness of the sample, ideally one would conduct a household survey covering uniformly the whole camp in order to identify the informants without any potential selection bias within the camp.[455] Unfortunately, such an initiative was beyond the limits of this study. I undertook the feasible randomization measures given my constraints. Thus, as mentioned above, I tried to diversify the sources of informant identification as much as possible. Also, in the surveys I included a question that inquired about the tentative location of the informants' residence (one of the 10 zones in the camp) to make sure that none of the areas of the camp was overrepresented in the sample. Third, as any other sample of former combatants, my sample of former child soldiers is indeed nonrandom by its nature, because it does not include those potential respondents who died during the war.

Data. Altogether, my survey project covered about 310 informants who were caught in Liberia's civil wars of 1989-1996 and 1997-2002. With the primary research focus on former child soldiers, I collected and conducted 202 surveys of children associated with armed forces, as well as 56 surveys of non-conscripted youth and 53 surveys of adult ex-combatants for control samples. 37 of 202 former child soldiers in my sample participated in more than one armed group or more than once in the same military organization before reaching 18 years of age. There were only 18 (or 8%) girl child soldiers in my sample.[456] The informants served as child soldiers predominantly in the NPFL armed faction, as opposed to other Liberian rebel groups.

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answers that were recorded by the enumerator and that the information on the filled questionnaire forms was not falsified. Such practice helped verify if the person could have been dishonest about his/her participation in the armed group. In addition, I needed to talk briefly to all the informants in order to identify the most critical and diverse group of candidates for my later in-depth interviews with some of them.

[455] Researchers pointed out that "the promise of chain-referral methods was tempered by the difficulty of making statistical inferences from this type of sample" (Salganik and Heckathorn, "Sampling and Estimation in Hidden Populations Using Respondent-Driven Sampling," p. 196).

[456] This does not represent the nature of girl recruitment in Liberia but rather my choice not to include girl soldiers into the survey for ethical and other considerations.

Section 2. Measurement of Concepts

Table 4 below summarizes the concepts proposed in my explanatory framework, as well as their operationalization, described in Chapter 3 on the explanatory framework, and measurement, which I will outline in greater detail in this section.

Table 4. Operationalization and Measurement of Concepts Used in the Argument

	Large-N Analysis				***Case Study Analysis***		
Concept	***Operationalization***	***Measurement***	***Index***	***%****	***Operationalization***	***Measurement***	***Index***
Group's child recruitment	*Child recruitment*	Instance of recruitment	0; 1	56/44	*Child recruitment*	Recruitment scope	low; med; high
Struggle intensity	Conventional warfare → *Fighting capacity*	Ability to challenge the opponent	low; high	55/45	*Conventional warfare*	Battles over strategic targets	yes; no
Extreme insecurity	*Ethnic persecution*	Instances of ethnic killings	0; 1	70/30	*Ethnic persecution*	Access to areas with ethnic persecution	yes; no
Material rewards	*Material capacity*	Nat. resource access; Diaspora funding; Third state support	0; 1 0; 1 0; 1	62/33 45/51 47/65	*Material rewards*	Soldiers compensation reported type	cash; loot
Access to people	*Territorial Access*	Territory control; Presence abroad	0; 1; 2	26/55 /19	*Access to people & territories*	Size of territory and population under control at home & abroad	#-s & scale
Group popularity	*Mobilization capacity*	Size of mobilizable constituency	low; high	55/45	*Mobilization capacity*	Ethnic & revolutionary mobilization	low; med; high

* This column reports on the distribution of the data for the corresponding indices in my large-*N* sample.

The Dependent Variable of Child Soldier Recruitment

To represent the concept of child soldier recruitment by armed groups I introduce the dependent variable of *child recruitment*. In my large-*N* analysis, it is a binary index that takes the values of 1 and 0, representing the fact of child recruitment practice employed by an armed group and the absence of such, respectively. I compiled these data by examining the child recruitment behavior of every insurgency in my dataset of 111 African conflict dyads. To code the *child recruitment* variable, I utilized information from secondary sources such as: 1) reports of IOs and NGOs that specialize in monitoring and reporting child recruitment around the world; 2) existing academic and practitioner studies (including surveys) of child soldiers in certain countries; 3) assessments of fieldworkers and reporters/journalists who worked closely with specific armed groups or whom I corresponded with regarding their potential witnessing of child soldiers in rebel ranks. Altogether, out of 111 insurgency dyads in my sample, 49 (or 44%) armed groups were coded as recruiting child soldiers at some point of their existence, whereas 62 (or 56%) were not found to be engaging in such a practice.

Several potential concerns might arise in connection to this operationalization of my dependent variable. First, the data on child recruitment instances do not distinguish between the age of recruits, as long as they are under 18 years old. Meanwhile, this benchmark of 18 years old used in my and other existing definitions of a *child soldier* as an age of adulthood has been subject to debate. The point is often made by observers and academics concerned that this number is driven by international conventions based on western norms about childhood and does not translate well to the context of Africa where, according to some, the age of adulthood is often reached much earlier, with some countries specifying it as low as 15 years old.[457] While I agree that there are cultural differences in defining who is a child, I nevertheless use the 18 year old benchmark in my work because the data on child soldier recruitment have been collected and coded by IOs and NGOs on the basis of this age criteria.[458]

The second possible problem relates to the treatment of child soldiers as a homogenous entity, without distinguishing between combat and logistical tasks of underage recruits.[459] The practitioners' definition of a *child soldier* does draw a distinction between these roles, but in data collection and reporting IOs and NGOs merge these categories together.[460] Some survey studies break down the data on child soldiers by roles performed in armed groups, age of recruitment and other characteristics, but there have not been many such projects to construct a meaningful disaggregated variable for a cross-sectional sample of 111 insurgencies.

The third potential concern with my dependent variable operationalization relates to the fact that in measuring *child recruitment* I do not make a distinction between voluntary and forced enrollment

[457] Thus, Andvig and Gates on purpose avoid any age restriction in their definition of a *child soldier*: "From a comparative perspective, defining a child to be a person below 15 years makes better sense. We have much sympathy for Shepler (2004) and other social anthropologists who insist that childhood is a social construct, and should be defined differently in different societies. Persons in their early 30s may then become children for some purposes" (Andvig and Gates, "Recruiting Children for Armed Conflict," p. 2).

[458] More specifically, fieldworkers operate with the following working definition of a child soldier: "any child – boy or girl – under 18 years of age, who is part of any kind of regular or irregular armed force or armed group in any capacity, including, but not limited to, cooks, porters, messengers, and anyone accompanying such groups other than family members" (UNICEF, "Fact Sheet," URL: ttp://www.unicef.org/protection/childsoldiers.pdf, p. 4).

[459] This distinction may be critical only for purely demand-driven propositions in my argument. One such demand-driven factor is armed struggle intensity that creates pressure on armed groups to recruit more combatants to substitute for casualties and succeed in the intensified attacks. Another demand-driven explanation in my argument is related to material rewards and compensations to adult soldiers and might not be that sensitive to the roles of child soldiers. There are two supply-based explanations that determine the outcome of child recruitment in my argument, namely situations of extreme insecurity that make children approach armed groups and groups' access to people and territories that ensures the supply of unwilling children. These supply-based explanations deal with the question of vulnerability of certain children for recruitment and, as such, might not be sensitive to the role distribution of children within armed groups.

[460] Consider the following broad spectrum of roles of child soldiers from the CSUCS definition mentioned above elsewhere in the text: "Child soldiers perform a range of tasks including: participation in combat, laying mines and explosives; scouting, spying, acting as decoys, couriers or guards; training, drill or other preparations; logistics and support functions, portering, cooking and domestic labour. Child soldiers may also be subjected to sexual slavery or other forms of sexual abuse" (CSUCS, *Child Soldiers Global Report*, 2008, p. 411).

methods, again due to data limitations. It is not possible to distinguish between forced or voluntary recruitment for all armed groups in my sample at this stage of the analysis. The situation gets even more complicated for a systematic data compilation as armed groups frequently utilize both methods of recruitment or their mix, depending on the context. Thus, in the absence of extensive surveys, it is simply not clear what type of child recruitment was prevalent in the strategy of most armed groups.

The fourth issue regarding my dependent variable is its inability to offer a time dimension, as it does not distinguish between child recruitment at different stages of conflict. Meanwhile, the resort to this practice is sometimes argued to occur only at a certain stage of armed conflict – namely, towards the end of armed struggle, as described in Chapter 2 on literature review.[461] However, without some preliminary evidence-based prominent pattern in time of child recruitment across different conflicts, I do not anticipate any adverse effects of a potential bias for my large-*N* analysis in the absence of time series data. I agree nevertheless that it is advisable to take the notion of timing into account and enrich the analysis by adding a time dimension to it. I therefore include the control variable of *conflict duration* into my large-*N* analysis to test the logic that longer conflicts will feature more child soldiers. I also analyze the temporal development of child recruitment in one of my case studies, where I trace yearly changes in the dependent variable of *child recruitment* for one Liberian faction – the NPFL – from 1989 to 1996.

Similarly, in the cross-group comparative case study I allow the variable of *child recruitment* to vary. Instead of the binary index employed in my large-*N* analysis, I introduce the measure which is based on three categories of the scope of child recruitment: 'low', 'medium' and 'high'. I set the value of 'low' to the armed groups for which child recruitment was reported to be somewhere around 30% relative to adults. 'Medium' child recruitment is assigned to factions with around 50% of children in their ranks. Groups with over 80% of their soldiers being underage are marked by the value of 'high'. Out of the five Liberian factions in my comparative case study none was abstaining from child recruitment practice. The information on the scope of the child recruitment in different Liberian armed groups was taken from my interviews with former Liberian child soldiers whom I asked to comment on the distribution of adults and children in their units.[462] Respondents' answers were then carefully analyzed and complemented with the knowledge about organization of Liberian factions in terms of their units and battalions' structure and mission, to account for potential overrepresentation of child soldier ratios in the whole group derived from the information about units that were made primarily of children.

[461] For a broader discussion of this point refer to this dissertation's Chapter 2 on literature review.
[462] Many former child soldiers could provide information on the size of their units, subunits, or groups with which they were associated. For small groups of 10 to 30 people they were able to give approximate numbers of underage recruits relative to adults. For larger units of which their groups were a part, they were asked to draw the approximate distribution of children and adults, as well as girls and women.

Independent Variables

Fighting Capacity. For my large-*N* analysis I borrowed the data on armed groups' *fighting capacity* from the NSA Dataset and recoded it to have the values of 'low' and 'high'.[463] The distribution of *fighting capacity* shows a large variation across my sample of armed groups, with 53 (or 55%) of them having the value 'low' and 43 (or 45%) the value 'high'. In my case study analysis I construct the measures of *fighting capacity* in all Liberian factions by reviewing the victories and losses of armed groups, as well as tracing their decisions to attack the capital. In my assessment I rely primarily on the ACLED Dataset, as well as on secondary sources such as newspaper articles and ethnographic or historical accounts of the Liberian conflict.[464]

Material Capacity. Below I outline how I measure three major types of material resources available to armed groups. I base my measurement of *natural resource access* on the data from two studies. First, I utilize Fearon's data compiled for 128 civil wars globally which measure if rebels rely on income from production or smuggling such commodities as cocaine, precious gems, or opium.[465] Second, I incorporate the data from Buhaug et. al.'s study, which measure the presence of oil, gemstones, and narcotics in conflict regions of war-torn countries.[466] Combining the information from both studies I examine three types of lootable and obstructable natural resources: gemstones, narcotics, and oil.[467] The data from Fearon and Buhaug et. al. could not be applied to my sample without some revision, modification, and additions, as outlined below.[468]

First, while Fearon's data did measure the actual reliance of rebels on natural resources, Buhaug et. al.'s dataset only recorded the presence or absence of natural resources in a country or conflict zone. As such, the latter data do not reflect whether a specific armed group actually had access to the commodities in question. For instance, while oil has been identified in Buhaug et. al.'s dataset as the natural resource

[463] In the original NSA Dataset this variable takes the following values: 'low', 'moderate', and 'high'. I merged categories of 'moderate' and 'high' into one category of 'high' due to lack of observations in the original 'high' category (only five in my sample).
[464] For more information on the Armed Conflict Location and Event Dataset (ACLED) that records instances of rebel participation in battles see Raleigh and Hegre, "Introducing ACLED," 2005.
[465] Fearon, "Why Do Some Civil Wars Last Much Longer than Others?" p. 284.
[466] Halvard Buhaug, Scott Gates, Päivi Lujala, *Geography, Rebel Capability, and the Duration of Civil Conflict*, Unpublished Manuscript, 2009.
[467] After performing an extensive search in the literature, I could not find any other rebel movements but the ones in Nigeria which would use "oil bunkering" to sustain their operations. For my dataset I compiled two measures on rebel access to *lootable* natural resources – one that includes access to oil revenues and one that does not. I ran my statistical tests on the models with each of these measurement variants of natural resource variable and results were the same.
[468] Among other things, the two datasets differed in terms of whether they coded or not the presence of gemstones and narcotics in the same conflicts. In such instances I relied on Buhaug et. al.'s dataset because it was more recent and thus could have accounted for more information. Also, unlike Fearon, Buhaug et. al. included oil commodity in their definition of lootable resources. At the same time, Buhaug et. al.'s data did not cover all of the countries that my sample was based on, with Fearon's data being more inclusive.

present within the conflict zone in Angola, it does not mean that the Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) or FLEC armed group could exploit this hydrocarbon commodity for profit.[469] While the motivations of an insurgency movement for control of natural resources are assumed, it might be challenging for rebels to capture or establish themselves permanently in commodity extraction areas, due to the extensive military protection of the latter by the government and other actors and sometimes by inconvenient geographic location of such sites.[470] Therefore, I made further effort to identify if armed groups in the countries or conflict zones with lootable natural resources actually had access to them.[471] To obtain this information, I analyzed secondary sources and documents written on financing rebel movements.[472]

The second alteration to the Buhaug et. al.'s datasets I had to make related to the geographic limit of their data to a conflict country or a conflict zone within national borders. At the same time, it is common for armed groups, especially in the internationalized civil wars, to rely on the extraction of natural resources in neighboring countries. Consider, for example, that the Ugandan Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) were known to rely widely "on income-generating activities in the eastern DRC, such as the

[469] I could not identify any report suggesting that UNITA or FLEC were relying on oil production revenues. Similarly, they were not found to be levying taxes on oil production or stealing the commodity for sale. Here is what Achim Wennmann wrote on UNITA's non-reliance on oil: "Oil production and export could be isolated from attacks during the civil war; except in late 1992, when UNITA attacked an on-shore oil installation" (Wennmann, "Conflict Financing and the Recurrence of Intra-State Armed Conflict," pp. 164-165, citing Duncan Clark, "Petroleum Prospects and Political Power" in Jackie Cilliers and Christian Dietrich, eds., *Angola's War Economy: The Role of Oil and Diamonds* (Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 2000), pp.195-218).

[470] Consider, for example, a case of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) which was not able to access the alluvial diamonds buried under the sands of the southern coastline of Namibia. "Not only had previous German colonial authorities addressed this lootability problem by defining the area as a strictly enforced *Sperrgebiet* (forbidden zone) in the wake of its genocide of the Herero, but the open terrain of the deserted coast also offered no cover to a guerrilla force. As put by a former SWAPO fighter, now Director of Mines, 'We could not have operated there. The South Africans would have simply bombed us'" (Le Billon, "Diamond Wars?" p. 360, from the interview with Kennedy Hamutenya, Namibian Ministry of Mines and Energy, April 2002).

[471] Contrary to my suspicion, however, this exercise confirmed that almost no insurgency from Fearon's and Buhaug et. al.'s dyads with natural resource presence happened not to have access to these commodities to finance its operations. What I did find different, however, is that some of the belligerents from these two datasets' dyads coded with the lack of resources were actually profiting from natural commodities. For example, Armed Islamic Group (GIA) and Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) of Algeria appeared in Buhaug et. al.'s dataset in the same dyad coded as having no natural resources in the conflict zone. Meanwhile, I found GIA to be reported to have access to drug trafficking, while FIS was not claimed to rely on any type of natural resources or contraband. The same discrepancy was found in the Fearon's data for other insurgencies in Somalia, Chad, and Uganda among others.

[472] The major sources I relied on came from the organizations and research projects that kept track of non-state armed movements. Such entities include but are not limited to: 1) Uppsala Conflict Data Program, *UCDP Database*, Uppsala University; URL: www.ucdp.uu.se/database; 2) "Transnational and Non-State Armed Groups: Legal and Policy Responses," Database, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva and the Programme on Humanitarian Policy and Conflict Research (HPCR) at Harvard University; 3) *Paramilitary Groups Database*, Global Security Project, URL: http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/para/index.html; 4) *Armed Conflict Report 2008*, Project Ploughshares, URL: http://www.ploughshares.ca/libraries/ACRText/ACR-TitlePage.html.

lucrative exploitation and trafficking of minerals."[473] However, in Buhaug et. al.'s dataset this armed group is coded as operating in the conflict zone without natural resources. In my sample, I accounted for cases such as the ADF by analyzing, again, secondary sources that report on rebel funding capabilities.

As a third change to the original data from both Fearon and Buhaug et. al., I added information for several missing dyads and actors that were not reflected in their datasets but present in my sample. For example, my sample had eight conflict dyads for Uganda with seven different actors, while Fearon's had only two dyads for this country, with two specified actors.[474]

Ultimately, 47 armed groups in my sample (or 42%) were recorded as not having access to natural resources, whereas 65 (or 58%) insurgencies relied on production and trafficking of lootable and obstructable resources.

To measure the second type of rebel financing – donations from *diaspora* communities and individuals – I borrow the data collected by the NSA Dataset for one of its variables which "indicates the extent to which a transnational rebel constituency supports a rebel movement."[475] My index of *diaspora support* is assigned the values of 0 – 'no support' and 1 – 'tacit or explicit support'.[476] Out of all African armed groups in my sample, 61 (or 66%) were found to have no diaspora support, whereas 32 (or 34%) received this type of assistance.

The data for *third states' support* to rebel groups in my sample also come from the NSA Dataset, which recorded whether insurgents were recipients of any of the three types of foreign government assistance: militarily, diplomatic, or financial.[477] Ninety two percent of all instances of foreign government assistance to the African armed groups in my sample came in the form of military supplies and troops.[478] Meanwhile, to represent my variable of *material capacity* in some meaningful way, I am most interested in monetary, or financial, supplies from the third states. However, any other type of military support might also alleviate the groups' burden of purchasing arms and ammunition and instead release financial resources to redistribute them among fighters in the form of salaries.[479] I therefore proceed with measuring third state support with the data that capture primarily military type of assistance. The indicator of the *third state support* takes the values of 0 – 'no support' and 1 – 'alleged or explicit

[473] "Transnational and Non-State Armed Groups Project," op. cit.
[474] Ugandan government in my dataset was recorded to have a civil strife with the following armed factions: WNBF, UPDA, UPA, UDCM/UPDCA, a faction of the UPDA, ADF, and LRA (with the latter coded as two separate entries in two different conflict dyads). Fearon's two dyads include government contestation with the 'NRA, etc.' and the 'LRA, West Nile, etc.'
[475] Description of this variable comes from my correspondence with Kristian Gleditsch, one of the NSA Project's authors.
[476] In the original NSA Dataset this variable takes the following values: 'no transactions recorded', 'tacit', 'explicit', or 'not known'. I recoded this variable into a binary indicator of support.
[477] From my correspondence with Kristian Gleditsch, one of the authors of the NSA Project.
[478] About 5% of armed groups had diplomatic support, and only 3% had the actual funding.
[479] Since I am making this assumption, I will be careful in interpreting the results of my test for this variable.

support'.[480] Among insurgencies in my sample, 45 (or 47%) had no support from other governments, and 51 (or 53%) received some third state assistance.[481]

It is worth noting that the literature on natural resources and conflict has identified the link between the presence of oil and other mineral commodities in a country and foreign states' support to its civil wars.[482] This is "because mineral wealth either increases the benefits of intervention (e.g. the Liberian leader Charles Taylor's 1991 support for the Revolutionary United Front in Sierra Leone) or reduces its cost (e.g. the Rwandan government's 'self-financing' incursion into the Democratic Republic of Congo in 1998)."[483] However, in my sample, the correlation coefficient between the variables of *natural resource access* and the *third state support* was found to be low (0.172).

In the case study analyses I go beyond examination of the three major sources of rebel funding and review other potential ways of financing military movements. What the case study analysis also allows me to do is to specify how exactly armed groups were compensating their fighters from all the material resources they had access to, if at all. In collecting these data I rely on the information from the surveys of other scholars and my own, as well as ethnographic studies on the Liberian conflict.

Extreme Insecurity. How to measure whether an armed struggle in a country involved ethnic persecution or not? Many armed conflict datasets offer a variable of conflict type where one of the categories is 'ethnic war'.[484] However, I could not utilize the existing data to test my argument because often intrastate wars with ethnic persecution present were not coded as 'ethnic war' in those datasets. This happens for several methodological reasons. First, the definition of 'ethnic conflict' in the existing datasets presupposes a criterion of militarized organization of factions based on ethnicity. For example, Fearon defines as 'ethnic' all civil wars "in which the fighting was in the name of or carried out primarily by groups organized along ethnic lines."[485] Meanwhile, conflicts with ethnic persecution do not necessarily face a militarization of the victimized group.

The second concern about the existing data is related to the haziness in coding ethnic civil wars as distinct from other civil wars with competing agendas, as "for any given rule, there are ambiguous or

[480] In the original NSA Dataset this variable had four categories: 'no support', 'alleged/widely acknowledged support', 'explicit/formal support', and 'not known'. I recoded this variable into a binary indicator.
[481] Eight out of the 51 groups with foreign state support in my sample had this assistance in the form of troops provision.
[482] Ross, "What Do We Know about Natural Resources and Civil War?" p. 344.
[483] Ibid., p. 344. For the same reasons of profiting from the beneficiary's natural resources, third states assist other governments, rather than rebels. For example, see how the regimes of Zimbabwe and Angola "helped themselves to the Congo's considerable diamond wealth" while assisting Kabila in stabilizing Congo (Byman et. al., *Trends in Outside Support for Insurgent Movements*, p. 19).
[484] For instance, in his list of 128 civil wars around the world James Fearon codes for 'ethnic wars' (Fearon, "Why Do Some Civil Wars Last Much Longer than Others?"). The NSA Project also marks 'ethnic war' as one of the categories of conflict type (Cunningham and Gleditsch, "The NSA Project").
[485] Fearon, "Why Do Some Civil Wars Last Much Longer than Others?" p. 288.

hard-to-code cases (e.g. the wars in Guatemala, Mozambique, and Sierra Leone)."[486] It must be for this reason that the Liberian conflict dyads of the Doe government with the NPFL and the ULIMO-J/K are all coded as 'civil war', not 'ethnic conflict', in the NSA Dataset.[487] While it is true that all Liberian factions had a goal of overthrowing the existing government or each other, they also engaged in the extensive ethnic persecution of the 'enemy' tribes – a practice not captured in the existing datasets.[488]

Facing these two important limitations of the existing data on ethnic conflict, for my large-*N* analysis I compiled the dummy variable of *ethnic persecution* myself. Regardless of the conflict type measure in other datasets (civil war, secessionist, or ethnic), for each conflict dyad in my sample I recorded instances of ethnic persecution in the country during that time reported in the media or any other published sources.[489] In other words, for each armed group in my sample this variable indicates whether the dyad's armed faction participated in the conflict that involved the purposeful killing of people from certain ethnic group(s) in the society by any party to the conflict, be it government or various rebel forces. Thus, 78 insurgent groups in my sample (or 70%) were operating in the environments free of deliberate ethnic killing, whereas 34 armed groups (or 30%) participated in conflicts with an ethnic persecution component. For comparison note that only 19 conflict dyads (or 18%) in my sample were coded as 'ethnic war' according to the definition used in the NSA Dataset.

Since all five Liberian factions in my case study were operating in the same conflict, there is no difference in the cross-country levels of the variable of *ethnic persecution*. However, the qualitative research design allows me to disaggregate this variable and examine in detail which ethnic tribes were particularly endangered and whether such a dire situation facilitated the insecurity of children to the extent that the latter would seek protection by joining armed groups. In addition, I examine the geography of armed groups' military operations and determine if victimized tribes had access to them or, alternatively, if groups accessed the endangered populations.

Territorial Access. To measure the territorial access of rebel groups for my large-*N* sample, I create a cumulative indicator that sums up the values of two indices. The first index is a binary measure of armed groups' *territorial control* within the country, taken as such from the NSA Dataset. The index takes the

[486] Ibid., p. 287.
[487] Cunningham and Gleditsch, "The NSA Project."
[488] Cunningham and Gleditsch pointed at this specific nature of the *conflict type* variable by admitting that this variable "is not based on a mutually exclusive typology" and allowing a conflict dyad to be coded with multiple categories representing different conflict types. At the same time, Liberian conflict, like some others in their database, were not assigned the value of 'ethnic war' when other agendas were seemingly more prevalent during the armed struggle (Cunningham and Gleditsch, "The NSA Project Codebook," p. 2).
[489] To code the variable of ethnic persecution I used he following secondary sources, among others: 1) The Minorities at Risk (MAR) Project Database (University of Maryland, Center for International Development and Conflict Management); 2) African Studies Center Database, University of Pennsylvania; 3) Uppsala Conflict Data Program, *UCDP Database*, Uppsala University; 4) African News Bulletin (ANB-BIA) Database.

values of 0 and 1 to represent the absence or presence of territory under rebels' control.[490] 64 (or 68%) of observations in my sample had no territorial control in a country and 30 (or 32%) did have control over some territory. To the index of internal *territorial control* within country's borders I add values of the *presence abroad* index which reflects if armed groups had access to neighboring countries. The latter index is intended to capture the effect of refugee militarization and mobilization mentioned above. The data for this index were also taken from the NSA Dataset and recoded to have two values of 0 and 1 to describe whether armed groups have established presence in other states.[491] There were altogether 39 groups (or 41%) without presence abroad, and 55 (or 58%) with some or extensive incidence in other states. The ultimate values of the cumulative variable of *territorial access* were distributed as follows: 24 rebel groups (or 26%) had no territory under their control (the value of 0), 50 (or 55%) had some territorial presence either at home or abroad (the value of 1), and 17 insurgent organizations (or 19%) established themselves both at home and abroad (the value of 2).

My case study analysis uses a more specific measure of the *territorial access*. I first look at the actual number of counties that each armed group captured from the opponent at different stages of war and also evaluate if rebels had established their presence in the refugee camps abroad. By further analyzing the demographic situation in the counties within Liberia, as well as in the refugee camps outside its borders, I then attempt to avoid the assumption that larger territories under rebel control lead to easier access to people by insurgents. Thus, in my case study analysis, I put an emphasis on determining what the actual pool of available populations was for recruitment in the territories under the groups' control. To test the logic of the territorial argument in the case study analysis I therefore look at both – accessibility of territories and availability of manpower there.

Conditioning Variable of Group Popularity

The data to measure the *mobilization capacity* variable were taken from the NSA Dataset described above that coded the levels of mobilization capacity of different insurgencies. The NSA Dataset recorded what outside observers assessed or believed a movements' capacity to mobilize popular support was. The intent of the coders of the NSA dataset was to record the degree of people's ideational support for an armed group, mostly at the initial stages of the movements. By definition, the assessment of the

[490] Initially, the NSA Dataset had this variable as categorical, with the third category besides 0 and 1 being 'unclear'. I substituted the 'unclear' observations (3 out of 97) in my sample with 'missing values'. To assess this variable, the Cunningham and Gleditsch' project "used historical sources and case histories to look for evidence that an insurgent group controlled territory in the country in civil war" (Cunningham and Gleditsch, "The NSA Project Codebook," p. 7).

[491] The original NSA Dataset had four values of 'no presence', 'alleged/widely acknowledged presence', 'explicit/known presence', and 'not known'. I merged the two categories of 'alleged/widely acknowledged presence' and 'explicit/known presence' into one category of 1 (present). The two values of 'not known' were coded as missing ones.

popularity that represents potential numbers for recruitment on ideological motives does not consider the actual recruitment, be it forced conscription or recruitment for pecuniary incentives.

After examining the codebooks of the NSA project for the variable of *mobilization capacity*, I found an overwhelming consistency of the coding procedures with the initial intent of the NSA project leaders. Thus, the following features prevailed in the notes of coders: 1) when popularity of a group was established, in the majority of cases it was recorded for early stages of the conflict; 2) in a small amount of cases where popularity of the movement was recorded at the end of the armed struggle, such an assessment was made on the basis of people's election preferences; 3) for armed groups with low mobilization capacity the coders reported no instances of popular support at any stage of the conflict; 4) for ethnic movements with low mobilization capacity the popularity was often assessed on the basis of the size of the ethnic group in question. All these features suggest no obvious methodological problems with this measurement of the *mobilization capacity* and it can be used in my analysis.

Rebel groups differ in their ability to mobilize popular support. The following examples demonstrate such a variation as well as shed more light on the creation of the *mobilization capacity* variable. The Kosovo Liberation Army (UCK) was coded in the NSA Dataset as having high mobilization capacity "because it was fighting for greater autonomy for Albanians in Serbia and was based in a region that was 90% Albanian."[492] By contrast, the Afar Liberation Front (ALF) in Ethiopia was rated as having 'low' mobilization capacity because the Afar people were a small minority within Ethiopia.[493] The variable of *mobilization capacity* in the NSA Dataset does not only capture ethnic grievances, but also "measures variation in, for example, the ability of guerrilla organizations to mobilize popular support against the government."[494] Variation in groups' *mobilization capacity* is reflected in my ultimate African insurgencies' sample, where out of 94 armed groups for which the data were available, 52 (or 55%) had 'low' mobilization capacity, whereas 42 (45%) had 'high'. The NSA's categories of 'low', 'moderate' and 'high' mobilization capacity I recoded in my sample with two categories of 'low' and 'high'.[495]

In the case study analyses I use a slightly more nuanced ordinal measure of popularity that takes the values of 'low', 'medium' and 'high', unlike the binary index coded for the large-*N* study.[496] In my

[492] Cunningham and Gleditsch, "The NSA Project," p. 6.
[493] Ibid., p. 6.
[494] Ibid., p. 6. Conceptual clarification of this variable comes from my correspondence (from January 3, 2009) with Kristian Gleditsch, one of the founders of the NSA Project.
[495] The variable's initial values of 'low', 'moderate' and 'high' I recoded into 'low' and 'high' in my sample, where 'low' was taken as such from the NSA Dataset, and 'high' was assigned to both categories of 'moderate' and 'high' of the original data due to a very small number of observations in the latter category. Out of 94 observations for which the values on the *mobilization capacity* variable were recorded in my sample, there were only five with the original value 'high' from the initial dataset.
[496] Albeit minor on the first sight, this more nuanced categorization can actually account for more variation in the analysis. For example, the mobilization capacity of the NPFL group is defined as 'medium' in my large-*N* dataset, whereas the ULIMO-J and the INPFL both had 'low' ability to mobilize their members. However, a more detailed

qualitative assessment of the ability of the Liberian groups to mobilize personnel, I evaluate two prominent types of ideological support and mobilization – ethnic and revolutionary. *Ethnic mobilization* in the Liberian context was occurring when the leaders of some armed groups appealed to ethnic differences in the population and played the ethnic card in the rally for supporters. *Revolutionary mobilization* was characterized by some factional leaders' call for political change, followed by the rise of 'revolutionary spirit' in some parts of the country. By using ethnographic works on the Liberian conflict, I evaluate both mobilization strategies of insurgents as well as popular attitudes towards the factions and the scope of supportive responses.

Control Variables

Poverty. In order to test on my large-*N* sample the hypothesis about effects of poverty on the voluntary and forced supply of children for armed groups, I construct a continuous measure of *poverty* by assigning to each government-insurgency dyad the country-level poverty value. I take a logarithm of average real GDP per capita in constant prices (chain series) taken from Penn World Tables for all the years of conflict in each dyad.[497] Because wealth in general deteriorates during the conflict, I take the average of poverty levels during the conflict, as opposed to looking at pre-war or post-war values. The log-poverty in my sample varies from 5.14 to 8.93.[498]

In my case study of the five Liberian armed groups country poverty levels are equivalent. This does not mean, however, that wealth and deprivation did not exhibit any regional variation. Thus, poverty in Liberia "has predominantly been a rural and peri-urban phenomenon, having its roots in policy and institutional failure due to corruption, cronyism and mismanagement, which caused over 85% of Liberians to have no access to basic healthcare, sanitation, safe drinking water, and hygiene..."[499] Conducting a focused comparison of five armed groups within one country provides me with the opportunity to construct alternative regional level measures of poverty for testing its explanatory power behind child soldier recruitment.[500]

Time of Conflict. In the large-*N* sample I measure the timing of conflict by introducing a binary index of *conflict ending before 1997*, which indicates if a conflict terminated prior to 1997. I chose 1997 as the

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analysis of case studies revealed that mobilization capacity of the ULIMO-J and the INPFL, in fact, was different. While mobilization of both groups was lower than the one in the NPFL – the fact accounted for in the cross-groups sample – it also varied between the two groups, with the ULIMO-J having a higher score. The latter feature, meanwhile, is not accounted for in a more generalized categorization of a large-*N* dataset, but was captured in the case study analysis, which allowed to perform a more informed comparison of Liberian armed groups.

[497] The data on real GDP per capita in constant prices (chain series) are provided in the World Penn Tables and has units of 1$ in 2000 constant prices. For more description of this measurement and data refer to the Penn World Tables' Appendix at http://pwt.econ.upenn.edu/Documentation/append61.pdf, p. 11.

[498] The variance of poverty levels across different conflict dyads of the same country exhibits the maximum of 1.39.

[499] Nyepon, "Liberia: The Nucleus to Reducing Poverty."

[500] Regional poverty within Liberia was assessed by using the pre-war data of Demographic and Health Survey (DHS).

benchmark year because it represents the mean of conflict ending years among the groups in my sample. I utilize the year of conflict termination, as opposed to conflict onset, because the former allows accounting for conflicts that started a long time ago but persisted all the way until the present. The data indicating when the dyadic conflict between an insurgent group and its major opponent ended were taken from the NSA Dataset.[501] 54 armed groups in my sample (or 48%) ceased their military activities prior to 1997, whereas 58 (or 52%) continued or initiated armed struggle after that year. In my case study, time of conflict is automatically controlled for as all five Liberian factions were operating in the same time span between 1989 and 1996.

Conflict Duration. The variable of *conflict duration* is measured in the number of years for which a conflict dyad between a certain armed group and the government existed. This measure was taken from the NSA Dataset. *Conflict duration* in my sample varied from several months to 21 years, with the data skewed towards the shorter length of fighting. The five Liberian armed groups in my case study did not exhibit much variation in their longevity, surviving for two to six years altogether.

Conflict Intensity. For my large-*N* sample I compiled a binary measure of *conflict intensity* using the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset.[502] Conflict intensity variable in this dataset is coded with two categories: 1 – for minor intensity reflected in 25 to 999 battle-related deaths in a given year; and 2 – for wars with "at least 1,000 battle-related deaths in a given year."[503] To construct the intensity index, I took the average of the yearly conflict intensity measures from UCDP/PRIO, dividing the sum of yearly conflict intensities by the number of conflict years. The *conflict intensity* variable in my sample takes values between zero and one, with the mean being 0.34. In my case study analysis, I measure *conflict intensity* for five armed groups in a slightly different way. There I employ data from the Armed Conflict Location and Event Dataset (ACLED) that records instances of rebel participation in battles.[504] I compare Liberian factions across their rate of battle participation averaged by the number of years they existed.

[501] To code this variable, Cunningham and Gleditsch' project used the data from the Uppsala Dataset and Gates and Strand (2005), as well as case histories (Cunningham and Gleditsch, "The NSA Project Codebook," p. 8).
[502] Nils Petter Gleditsch, Peter Wallensteen, Mikael Eriksson, Margareta Sollenberg and Håvard Strand, "Armed Conflict 1946–2001: A New Dataset," *Journal of Peace Research* 39(5), pp. 615–637, 2002.
[503] "UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset Codebook, Version 4-2008," http://www.prio.no/sptrans/1664678440/Codebook.pdf, p. 7.
[504] Raleigh and Hegre, "Introducing ACLED," 2005.

Section 3. Large-*N* Analysis

Multiple Logistic Regression. To assess how well my independent variables predict the occurrence of the binary dependent variable of *child recruitment* I use the multiple logistic regression. The base model I estimate is specified below:[505]

$$p(cs)^* = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Mob + \beta_2 Fight + \beta_3 Eth + \beta_4 Mat + \beta_5 Terr + \beta_6 Pov + \beta_7 End97 + \varepsilon \quad \text{(Model 1)}$$

Multiple Logistic Regression with Interaction Terms. My argument, however, goes beyond exploring the relationships between additive explanatory variables and child soldering.[506] More specifically, I need to estimate the effect of several independent variables (namely *fighting capacity, ethnic persecution, material capacity* and *territorial access*) on the dummy dependent variable of *child recruitment* at various levels of the conditioning variable of *mobilization capacity*. Since I hypothesize that a group's *fighting capacity*, *territorial access* and *material capacity* should have larger impact on child soldier recruitment if the group is *unpopular*, I need to estimate and compare the effects of these three independent variables on the dependent variable at low levels of *mobilization capacity*. Similarly, I need to analyze if *ethnic persecution* has more significant proposed effect on child soldier recruitment when *mobilization capacity* is high.

The proper way of estimating the effects of one variable on another at various levels of a third variable is to include the interaction term into a regression.[507] My second model therefore contains several interaction terms and the equation I am estimating is formulated as follows:[508]

$$p(cs)^* = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Mob + \beta_2 Fight + \beta_3 Eth + \beta_4 Mat + \beta_5 Terr + \beta_6 Mob \times Fight + \beta_7 Mob \times Eth + \beta_8 Mob \times Mat + \beta_9 Mob \times Terr + \beta_{10} Pov + \beta_{11} End97 + \beta_{12} Dur + \beta_{13} Int + \varepsilon \quad \text{(Model 2)}$$

As an attempt to address a potential multicollinearity problem in Model 2, I also run its variants with only one interaction term at a time.[509] A common specification of these alternative models has the following form:[510]

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[505] In the equation *Mob* stands for the variable of *mobilization capacity*, *Fight* for *fighting capacity, Eth* for *ethnic persecution, Mat* for *material capacity, Terr* for *territorial access, Pov* for *poverty, End97* for *conflict ending prior to 1997*.

[506] In a regression [that is linear in parameters] the relationship between two independent variables can be described as additive – that is, the effect of these independent variables on the dependent variable is constant regardless of the value of each other (Cindy Kam and Franzese, Robert, *Modeling and Interpreting Interactive Hypotheses in Regression Analysis*, The University of Michigan Press: Ann Arbor, 2007, p. 20).

[507] While "the simple linear-additive multiple-regression model estimates a single, constant effect of x on y, controlling for z," "the linear-interactive model estimates the effect of x on y as a function of z" and thus represents the technique that fits my theoretical modeling (Kam and Franzese, *Modeling and Interpreting Interactive Hypotheses in Regression Analysis* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2007), p. 20).

[508] In this equation *Dur* stands for control variable of *conflict duration,* and *Int* for *conflict intensity.*

[509] On the one hand, this model type does not contain the information on the effect of the interaction when controlled for all others proposed in the explanatory framework. On the other hand, exclusion of all but one proposed

$$p(cs)^{*} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Mob + \beta_2 Fight + \beta_3 Eth + \beta_4 Mat + \beta_5 Terr + \beta_6 Pov + \beta_7 End97 + \beta_8 Mob \times Var + \varepsilon$$

(Model 3)

In addition, I also estimate all of the above models without the interactions' constitutive variable of *mobilization capacity.* The literature on interactions is divided in terms of advisability of inclusion of individual constitutive variables of interaction terms into the model.[511] While some texts in statistics on interaction terms advocate for inclusion of the constitutive variable, even if it does not turn out significant, others suggest that its inclusion should be strictly motivated by theory since there is no statistical reason to include it into the model.[512] My explanatory framework does not offer any theoretical support for inclusion of the variable of *mobilization capacity* on its own into the model, as there is no reason to expect that mobilization capacity in itself should have effect on child soldering. Also, as I show below in the empirical chapter, the constituent term of *mobilization capacity* exhibits very high collinearity with its interaction terms as it enters them multiplicatively, and its inclusion would complicate inference on the remaining coefficients of interest.[513]

Split Samples. As yet another check of the presence of interactive relationships in my argument, I run again logistic regression estimation of Model 1, but this time on the two split sub-samples of *popular* and *unpopular* armed groups. The biggest advantage of splitting the sample into popular and unpopular insurgencies, instead of estimating interaction terms on the sample of all armed groups, is in avoiding potential multicollinearity in the full interactive model. A disadvantage of the sample splitting approach,

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interactions allows seeing if the effect of the interaction term in question does not lose its significance, suggesting that it was not mistakenly appearing in the full model due to potential multicollinearity problem. Even though in my base model the independent variables are not correlated among themselves (as the correlation matrix in Table 4 of Chapter 5 demonstrates), some correlations occur between interaction terms and their constituent variables (the base variables out of which the product of interaction term is composed), as well as among interaction terms themselves. This is not surprising as including an interaction (which is a product term) in a general linear model often "can drastically increase the level of collinearity" (Regina Branton, "Statistical Interaction in Multiple Regression," On-line Manual, http://www.ruf.rice.edu/~branton/interaction/faqfund.htm). This effect of multicollinearity in interactive models arises because the product term of an interaction "is an exact nonlinear function of the constituent variables" and, therefore, "correlations of the constituent variables with the product term are usually high" (Branton, "Statistical Interaction in Multiple Regression"). This is exactly what is happening in my model. In Chapter 5 on the empirical results I also compare VIF and tolerance (1/VIF) statistics across the models.

[510] *Var* in this equation stands for any of the four variables of *fighting capacity (Fight), ethnic persecution (Eth), material capacity (Mat)*, and *territorial access (Terr).*

[511] Constitutive variable refers to either of the two variables in the interaction term. For example, in the interaction term *Mob*Terr* one constitutive variable is *mobilization capacity (Mob)* and another one is *territorial access* (*Terr)*.

[512] For the view advocating for inclusion of the constitutive variable into a regression analysis see Thomas Brambor, William Roberts Clark, Matt Golder, "Understanding Interaction Models: Improving Empirical Analyses," *Political Analysis* 2006 14(1), pp. 63-82. These authors provide an overview of the mathematical effect from excluding constituent variables from the regression. For the opposite opinion refer to Kam and Franzese, *Modeling and Interpreting Interactive Hypotheses in Regression Analysis*, pp. 99-102. More specifically, they state: "While the rule of including x and z if including xz may be quite reasonable […] and is often practically advisable, it is neither logically not statistically strictly necessary" (p. 99).

[513] For a discussion on this multicollinearity issue please refer to Chapter 5 on the empirical results and previous footnote 250.

however, is in its inability to "determine whether any differences in estimated effects across sub-samples are statistically significant."[514] In addition, split samples contain fewer observations and thus might potentially reduce the explanatory power of the model.[515]

β-coefficients. In the presence of an interaction the influence of a constituent variable enters through more than one independent variable in the regression – first the constituent variable itself and second the interactive term. Thus, the β-coefficient of the constitutive variable does not represent "a constant effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable."[516] At the same time, the β-coefficient on the interaction term and its *p*-value do tell us whether the constituent variable interacts with the term significantly and what the size of the *partial* effect of this interaction is. In other words, the β-coefficients of constituent variables and their p-values inform us about the size and significance of the *partial* effects of these variables on child soldiering at zero value of *mobilization capacity*, when controlling for all other variables and their interactions. Despite the somewhat limited use of β-coefficients in interpreting multiple logistic regressions with interactive effects, generating and reporting β-coefficients is still important as it helps assess whether my proposed theoretical model is significant, whether my predictors are meaningful, and whether proposed interactive relationships exist.

Marginal Effects. Because in a nonlinear model such as the logistic regression, the β-coefficients do not have the same interpretation as in the linear regression model (see the Technical Appendix for further details), one cannot use them to interpret the effect of independent variables on the dependent variable. Therefore, in order to offer the numerical assessment of the effect of my independent variables on the dependent variable I calculate and present the marginal effects of predictors in my model.[517] Since the β-coefficients and the marginal effects represent two different quantities, and are calculated in a different way, their pattern of significance may differ. Thus, for example, one can obtain a statistically insignificant β-coefficient on a certain variable, while the marginal effect of that variable may in fact not be statistically significant.

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[514] In other words, by splitting the sample we may not "as easily determine the (conditional) effects of the variable being treated as the moderating variable as one can in the pooling strategy" (Kam and Franzese, *Modeling and Interpreting Interactive Hypotheses in Regression Analysis*, p. 104).

[515] These important disadvantages, especially the first one, of the sample splitting in regression analysis preclude me from using such approach as the main method in my statistical analysis. Therefore, I focus on the full-sample approach and reserve the sub-sample estimation for sensitivity and robustness checks of the main model. Such strategy was also recommended in the Kam and Franzese, *Modeling and Interpreting Interactive Hypotheses in Regression Analysis*, p. 105.

[516] Regina Branton, "Statistical Interaction in Multiple Regression." Thus, the value of β_5, for example, for the *territorial access* in Model 1 represents only a part of the effect of *territorial access* on the dependent variable of *child soldiering,* when *mobilization capacity* equals zero. The remaining part of the effect (when *mobilization capacity* equals one) acts via the interaction term.

[517] Due to the nonlinear functional form of the logistic regression, the marginal effect in a logistic regression is a function of several of its β-coefficients (see the Technical Appendix for further details).

In the context of my model, the marginal effect of the constituent variables on the dependent variable of *child soldiering* measures the change in the probability of child recruitment resulting from the increase of the variable of interest from its low to high value for a representative armed group.[518] To calculate marginal effects, I take the difference between the probability of *child soldiering* evaluated at two different levels of the variable of interest while keeping other explanatory variables constant at their means.[519] The following formula is used to calculate marginal effects (ME):

$$ME(x_k) = p(cs \mid x_k = x_k^{\max}) - p(cs \mid x_k = x_k^{\min})$$

where

$$p(cs \mid x_k = x^*) = \frac{\exp(\beta_0 + \beta_1 x_1 + ... + \beta_{k-1} x_{k-1} + \beta_k x^*)}{1 + \exp(\beta_0 + \beta_1 x_1 + ... + \beta_{k-1} x_{k-1} + \beta_k x^*)}$$

with x* taking the values of 0 and 1 for dummy variables and *min* and *max* for categorical and continuous variables. The calculated number represents the change in the probability of *child soldiering* resulting from the increase of the variable of interest from its low value to high.[520]

Section 4. Case Studies Analysis

To perform a qualitative test of my argument I utilize three different case study methods – a focused structured cross-case comparison, a within-case study, and two plausibility probes. I outline all three approaches below.

Cross-case comparison. My first case study analysis involves exploration of my argument on the five Liberian armed groups that took part in the country's first Civil War of 1989-1996. More specifically, I perform a *structured focused comparison* of these five factions. It is *focused* because "it deals selectively with only certain aspects of historical case" and *structured* because it employs "standardized, general

[518] This holds irrespective whether the β-coefficients are stated in their level values or as odds ratios. However, the β-coefficients serve as the input into calculating the marginal effects of independent variables in the logistic regression with interaction terms.

[519] Unlike in the multiple linear regression, where effects are constant, in the multiple logistic regression the formula for the marginal effect of an independent variable is a function of model variables. Therefore, to compute the marginal effect of a variable of interest, one needs to specify a value for all these variables in the marginal effects formula. Typically, a value that is in some sense representative of the sample is chosen. In my case I use means for dummy and continuous variables computed on the two samples that correspond to low and high mobilization capacity, because I calculate marginal effects separately for popular and unpopular groups using the β-coefficients from the pooled sample. Even though a mean value for dummy variables does not have a direct interpretation, this is not the object to be interpreted. Such value merely positions the system at its numerical averages to avoid the effects of extremes entering the calculation of the marginal effects on the variable of interest which changes along its natural scale from 0 to 1.

[520] Several β-coefficients enter into the calculation of a single marginal effect. Thus, it can happen that a marginal effect may not be significant even if the β-coefficients used in the calculation of that marginal effect are significant, as may occur for example when the relevant β-coefficients have opposite signs.

questions" to collect comparable data for assessment across cases.[521] To conduct a systematic analysis of the comparable data I then rely on the *congruence* method as a form of controlled comparison approach which is compatible with examination across cases.[522] The mechanics of *congruence* method are outlined below:

> "The analyst first ascertains the value of the independent variable in the case at hand and then asks what prediction or expectation about the outcome of the dependent variable should follow from the theory. If the outcome of the case is consistent with the theory prediction, the analyst can entertain the possibility that a causal relationship may exist."[523]

Applied to my work, in the detailed analysis of the five Liberian armed groups I first sort the factions into popular and unpopular movements. Then, after systematic data collection for the five factions, in each of these two categories of group types I identify the levels of the independent variables of *fighting capacity* and *ethnic persecution* for popular groups, and variables of *fighting capacity, material capacity* and *territorial access* for the unpopular ones. The factions in the two categories exhibited considerable differences in the levels of the corresponding independent variables, which allowed making certain predictions about different outcomes of child soldier recruitment. I then compare the predicted values of the dependent variables that are driven by the values of two different sets of independent variables in cases of popular and unpopular groups with the existing levels of child soldier recruitment in each case of the five Liberian factions. Similarly to statistical tests, the primary role of the *congruence* method is to assess the explanatory power of the proposed theory.[524] However, unlike the large-*N* analysis, the *congruence* method employed in qualitative research offers a more nuanced way of testing, verification, and refinement of my argument, as it operates on a more specific level of analysis with less abstract measures of the concepts.

The *congruence* method, however, comes with the caveat that "the finding of mere consistency between a theory's predictions and case outcomes may not be significant."[525] I attempt to mitigate this

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[521] Alexander George, "Case Studies and Theory Development: The Method of Structured, Focused Comparison," in Paul Gordon Lauren, ed., *Diplomacy: New Approaches in History, Theory, and Policy*, (New York: Free Press, 1979), pp. 61-62.

[522] For conceptualization of congruence method as a form of controlled comparison approach see George and Bennett, *Case Studies*, p. 183. The compatibility of the congruence method with cross-case analysis is outlined in Alexander George's earlier work: "Depending on how the congruence method is employed, then, it is compatible with either within-case and across-case methods of causal inference and can serve to bridge them" (Alexander George, "The Role of the Congruence Method for Case Study Research," Working Paper (MacArthur Program on Case Studies, 1997)).

[523] George and Bennett, *Case Studies*, p. 181.

[524] "…the investigator begins with a theory and then attempts to assess its ability to explain or predict the outcome in a particular case. The theory posits a relation between variance in the independent variable and variance in the dependent variable; it can be deductive if takes the form of an empirical generalization" (George and Bennett, *Case Studies*, p. 181).

[525] George and Bennett, *Case Studies*, p. 181.

potential limitation of the method by following the advice offered in the literature.[526] First, I provide in my explanatory framework "a plausible or convincing argument that the deductive theory … being employed is powerful…" and offer the large-*N* test to verify my propositions.[527] Second, following a focused structured comparison of five armed groups utilizing congruence method I employ yet another case study research method of *process-tracing* for one Liberian armed faction. By making use of this method, I attempt to identify a causal path (the causal chain) that depicts how my independent variables lead to the outcome of the dependent variable.[528] The method of *process-tracing* is described below.

Within-case analysis. The second case study I conduct is a *temporal* examination of one Liberian insurgent group. Here I test my argument on yet another level of analysis. More specifically, I identify and establish the variance in the values of child soldier recruitment by the NPFL rebel group at different time conjunctures of yearly data. I then explore if and how the temporal changes in the outcome of the dependent variable are caused by my predictors of underage recruitment. By analyzing a single country diachronically I therefore achieve higher comparability of cases.[529]

Unlike merely testing potential presence of causal effects in large-*N* study, in cross-group case studies and to some extent in within-case temporal analysis, the method of *process-tracing* allows to evaluate the actual validity and existence of proposed or assumed causal mechanisms and paths.[530] More specifically, this method "attempts to identify the intervening causal process – the causal chain and causal mechanism – between an independent variable (or variables) and the outcome of the dependent variable."[531] The fundamental conceptual difference of *process-tracing* from statistical analysis or *controlled comparison* method across or within cases is its focus on "sequential processes within a particular historical case, not on correlation of data across cases."[532] "In process tracing, the researcher examines histories, archival documents, interview transcripts, and other sources to see whether the causal process a theory

[526] On two suggestions of George and Bennett about how to deal with the potential problem of "unjustified, questionable imputation of a causal relationship on the basis of mere consistency" see George and Bennett, *Case Studies*, pp. 183-184.
[527] George and Bennett, *Case Studies*, p. 184.
[528] Ibid., p. 183.
[529] Lijphart recommends examining one particular case diachronically in order to "maximize comparability" – a strategy that he claims "generally offers a better solution to the control problem than comparison of two or more [cases]" (Arend Lijphart, "Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method," *American Political Science Review* 65 (3), 1971, pp. 682–693, at p. 689, cited in George and Bennett, *Case Studies*, p. 166).
[530] The necessity and desirability of process-tracing have been identified in many social science methodology studies. For some examples refer to George and Bennett, *Case Studies*, p. 147 and Sidney Tarrow, "Bridging the Quantitative-Qualitative Divide," p. 173.
[531] George and Bennett, *Case Studies*, p. 206. According to its proponents, "*process-tracing* is one means of attempting to get closer to the mechanisms of microfoundations behind observed phenomena. Process-tracing attempts to empirically establish the posited intervening variables and implications that should be true in a case if a particular explanation of that case is true. Theories or models of causal mechanisms must undergird each step of hypothesized causal process for that process to constitute a historical explanation of the case" (George and Bennett, *Case Studies*, p. 147).
[532] George and Bennett, *Case Studies*, p. 13.

hypothesizes or implies in a case is in fact evident in the sequence and values of the intervening variables in that case."[533]

Applied to my case study of the Liberia's NPFL armed group, besides connecting the independent variables with the dependent variable of *child recruitment*, I attempt to trace their sequential relationship. For example, after establishing that spikes of child soldier recruitment occurred during the years of the NPFL attacks on the capital, I go beyond this important link between *child recruitment* and *fighting capacity* variables and try to verify whether children were recruited specifically for these battles for Monrovia or in the aftermath as a result of access to highly populated recruitment grounds. Similarly, I try to analyze if the geographic prevalence of child recruitment in Monrovia was a result of increased fighting severity and high demand for combat soldiers or if it was due to some other factors related to characteristics of the place. I base the *process-tracing* analysis primarily on my own survey and interview data, but also utilize information from the ethnographic accounts of others on the conflict in Liberia.

Plausibility probe. After identifying in the quantitative and qualitative analysis that my argument has a significant explanatory power in the African context, I attempt to explore if my testable propositions can be generalized to all insurgencies in the world. In the absence of a readily available large-*N* sample with the necessary data on armed groups from other continents but Africa, I conduct additional case studies of two Asian and Latin American insurgencies. With the explorative research objective in mind, I perform a case study analysis of a *plausibility probe* type.[534] This particular method exhibits a preliminary exploration of "relatively untested theories and hypotheses to determine whether more intensive and laborious testing is warranted."[535] In the *plausibility probe*, I again employ the *congruence* method that is compatible with this type of case study analysis as well.[536] However, since the primary goal of this exercise is not a rigid theory testing or theory building but rather a weaker endeavor that alternates between the two, I do not perform a focused structured comparison across cases. Rather, I explore in each individual case whether my explanatory framework maintains its power in terms of correlation between preliminary values of my predicted variables and the dependent variable of child soldiering.

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[533] Ibid., p. 6.
[534] This type of case study analysis is among five or six other types designed for different objectives in theory building and theory testing. For the list of other commonly acknowledged types identified by Arend Lijphart and Harry Eckstein in the early 1970s and for another offered by Alexander George and Andrew Bennett, see George and Bennett, *Case Studies*, pp. 74-75.
[535] George and Bennett, *Case Studies*, p. 75.
[536] Ibid., p. 182.

Chapter 5: Empirical Results

In this chapter I first present in Section 1 the results of logistic regressions which I ran for the base model of child soldier recruitment (Model 1 specification in Chapter 4 on methodology) for the sample of 112 African armed groups. I estimated different versions of my model with three alternative measures of the *material capacity* variable. I evaluate how well the empirical results from my large-*N* analysis support my four explanatory factors specified in Hypotheses 1-4. I then estimate the extended model variants with interaction terms (Models 2 and 3 specifications in Chapter 4 on methodology). I compare the outcomes of the different specifications of the base and the extended models and show how they confirm the desirability of including interaction terms, as proposed in my extended explanatory framework.

I examine the findings from my analysis of the extended models in order to determine whether the predictor variables have different explanatory power in the case of popular and unpopular insurgencies. In evaluating the results of logistic regressions I interpret both β-coefficients and the marginal effects of the explanatory variables. I also compare the outcomes of logistic regressions with interaction terms on the full sample of all 112 African armed groups with those without interaction terms on the two split samples of popular and unpopular military organizations.

In Section 2, I offer a discussion of results where I comment on the factors that did not behave exactly as predicted in my explanatory framework. In Section 3, I further elaborate on the degree of the potential endogeneity problem caused by reverse causality and omitted variables. I show the preventative measures I undertook to mitigate this risk. I conclude this chapter with a summary of findings.

Section 1. Models Specification and Results

Table 5. Summary Statistics for all Variables Used in the Analysis

Variable	*Observations*	*Mean*	*Std. Dev.*	*Minimum*	*Maximum*
Proposed Factors:					
Child Soldiering	111	0.441	0.498	0	1
Mobilization Capacity	94	0.446	0.499	0	1
Fighting Capacity	97	0.443	0.499	0	1
Material Capacity					
Index	112	1.330	0.894	0	3
Diaspora Money	95	0.347	0.478	0	1
Third State Support	96	0.53	0.501	0	1
Natural Resources Control	112	0.580	0.495	0	1
Ethnic Persecution	112	0.303	0.461	0	1
Territorial Access	91	0.923	0.670	0	2
Control Variables:					
Poverty	102	6.923	0.718	5.139	8.934
EndBefore1997	112	0.482	0.501	0	1
Conflict Duration	111	5.045	5.167	0	21
Conflict Intensity	87	1.341	0.398	1	2

Base Model

Specification. The summary statistics for all variables used in my empirical analyses are presented in Table 5. Table 6 contains results of the logistic regressions on Models 1-4. These models were designed to test my four explanatory factors, as well as control variables, without distinguishing between the two different types of popular and unpopular insurgencies. As can be seen from Table 6, Models 1-4 do not show any obvious signs of misspecification: the predicted values squared (_hatsq) of the linktest in STATA are not significant.[537] This is not surprising as almost all predictors from my argument, except *material capacity*, score significantly. Models 1-4 fit the data well with the log likelihood chi-square tests showing that the models are overall statistically significant, with both Pearson's and Hosmer and Lemeshow's goodness of fit statistics being insignificant.[538] The Pseudo R^2 values are relatively high, which also suggests a good model fit.

Results. Overall, results from Models 1-4 confirm all but one (Hypothesis 2) of my Hypotheses 1, 3, and 4. Thus, rebels' *fighting capacity*, *ethnic persecution* in a conflict, as well as insurgents' *territorial access* and control all positively affect the probability of armed groups to recruit children. However, the variable of *material capacity* proved to be insignificant, suggesting no support for my argument about rebels' propensity to refrain from child recruitment if they can compensate otherwise unwilling adults to join the ranks of insurgency. Nonetheless, in Models 1.1, 1.2 and 2 the coefficients, albeit insignificant, have a negative sign as postulated.

The control variable of *poverty* bordered on significance in Models 2 and 4, suggesting some support for the poverty argument. Again, the sign on the coefficients (both significant and insignificant ones) was negative, as proposed in my explanatory framework. The control variable of *conflict timing* was estimated as significant and negative. *Conflict intensity* and *conflict duration* control variables did not exhibit any significant effects on child soldier recruitment when included in Model 1.1. Therefore, I excluded the latter two from the alternative Models 1.2-4, in order to maximize the ratio of sample size to the number of explanatory variables.

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[537] The linktest is considered to be a useful tool, albeit limited, to detect specification errors. It is typically accompanied by other diagnostic testing procedures ("Lesson 3: Logistic Regression Diagnostics," in Xiao Chen, Phil Ender, Michael Mitchell and Christine Wells, *Logistic Regression with Stata* (Stata Web Books), URL: http://www.ats.ucla.edu/stat/Stata/webbooks/logistic/chapter3/statalog3.htm).

[538] Hosmer and Lemeshow's goodness-of-fit test in Model 2, however, has a significant p-value of 0.086.

Table 6. Logistic Regressions of Child Recruitment without Interaction Terms

	1.1	1.2	2	3	4
Fighting Capacity	2.010***	1.608***	1.635**	1.744***	1.564**
	(0.73)	(0.61)	(0.66)	(0.63)	(0.61)
	7.463	4.993	5.129	5.720	4.778
	[1.78; 31.21]	[1.51; 16.50]	[1.41; 18.70]	[1.66; 19.66]	[1.45; 15.79]
Material Capacity *Index*	-0.071	-0.038			
	(0.46)	(0.39)			
	0.931	0.963			
	[1.38; 2.29]	[0.45; 2.07]			
Diaspora Money			0.307		
			(0.69)		
			1.359		
			[0.35; 5.26]		
Third State Support				-1.102	
				(0.74)	
				0.332	
				[0.08; 1.42]	
Natural Resource Access					0.562
					(0.61)
					1.754
					[0.53; 5.80]
Ethnic Persecution	2.005**	1.571**	1.333*	1.887***	1.509**
	(0.86)	(0.71)	(0.71)	(0.71)	(0.66)
	7.426	4.811	3.792	6.600	4.522
	[1.38; 40.07]	[1.20; 19.35]	[0.94; 15.25]	[1.64; 26.54]	[1.24; 16.49]
Territorial Access	1.965**	1.618***	1.530***	2.105***	1.472***
	(0.83)	(0.58)	(0.50)	(0.65)	(0.53)
	7.135	5.043	4.618	8.207	4.358
	[1.40; 36.30]	[1.62; 15.72]	[1.73; 12.30]	[2.30; 29.34]	[1.54; 12.31]
Controls:					
Poverty (log)	-0.343	-0.765	-0.824*	-0.816	-0.869*
	(0.57)	(0.49)	(0.49)	(0.50)	(0.51)
	0.710	0.465	0.439	0.442	0.419
	[0.23; 2.17]	[0.18; 1.22]	[0.17; 1.15]	[0.17; 1.18]	[0.15; 1.14]
End Before 1997	-2.286***	-2.036***	-1.937***	-2.453***	-1.92***
	(0.83)	(0.70)	(0.66)	(0.77)	(0.67)
	0.102	0.131	0.144	0.086	0.147
	[0.02; 0.52]	[0.03; 0.51]	[0.04; 0.53]	[0.02; 0.39]	[0.04; 0.55]
Conflict Duration	-0.049				
	(0.08)				
	0.952				
	[0.81; 1.11]				
Conflict Intensity	-0.726				
	(1.13)				
	0.484				
	[0.05; 4.43]				
Cons	1.204	3.418	3.724	3.845	3.914
	(4.09)	(3.41)	(3.39)	(3.52)	(3.55
N	70	83	80	83	83
Pseudo R^2	0.37	0.34	0.32	0.37	0.35
_hatsq in linktest	0.862	0.892	0.930	0.844	0.877
Log likelh (Prob>chi2=0)	-30	-37	-37	-36	-37
Goodness-of-fit test, p-value					
Hosmer-Lemeshow	0.012	0.613	0.086	0.565	0.736
Pearson	0.735	0.498	0.463	0.573	0.553
Max VIF	1.80	1.90	1.41	1.66	1.36
Min tolerance (1/VIF)	0.91	0.53	0.71	0.61	0.74
AIC	78.89	88.56	87.73	86.18	87.72

Note: Logistic regression coefficients are marked with * when significant at 10%; ** significant at 5%; *** significant at 1%. Standard errors are reported in parentheses, and below are odds ratios and their 95% confidence intervals (in square brackets).

Models with Interaction Terms

Specification. Table 7 summarizes the results of logistic regressions for Models 5-8, which include all interactions proposed in my extended explanatory framework and which use different alternative measures of the *material capacity* variable. The results offer relatively good support for my hypotheses, with some degree of variation. The key variables in my argument are significant in most of the models, suggesting that the predictors included into my model specification are meaningful. Almost none of the control variables in Model 5.1 scored significantly and hence I excluded two of them – *conflict duration* and *conflict intensity* – from the equations, as my theoretical framework did not offer a strong justification for their inclusion in the first place. Elimination of these two control variables from the analysis increased the number of observations from 69 to 80 and hence reduced the relatively large ratio of explanatory variables to the sample size. Results from Model 5.2 demonstrate that the exclusion of insignificant controls of *conflict duration* and *conflict intensity* does not change the significance pattern of key variables and yields virtually equivalent goodness of fit for the model.[539] Models 6-8 in Table 7 are variants of Model 5.2 with alternative measures of *material capacity* variable. Similarly to Model 5.2, insignificant controls were also excluded from Models 6-8, after I ran their full variants and found no substantial difference in estimated parameters between the models with and without controls.[540]

Large coefficients and standard errors on the constituent term of *mobilization capacity* in Model 5.2 suggest that this term might be multicollinear with its interactive variables as it enters them multiplicatively.[541] This is indeed confirmed by the large correlation coefficients between *mobilization capacity* and *mobilization*fighting* (0.58), *mobilization*ethnic* (0.53), *mobilization*material* (0.80), and *mobilization*territory* (0.78). Therefore, for comparison purposes I also ran Models 5*-8* as versions

[539] In Models 5.1 and 5.2, predicted values squared (_hatsq) of the linktest in STATA are not significant with somewhat similar p-values of 0.591 and 0.333. Pseudo R^2 in Model 5.2 lowered from Model 5.1's 0.57 to 0.43, but this change could be attributed to the increase of the sample size from 69 to 80. There is no indication that Model 5.2 fits the data worse than Model 5.1. The commonly used test of model fit, Hosmer and Lemeshow's goodness-of-fit test, on the one hand, has insignificant p-values in both Models, but is higher in Model 5.2 (0.666 instead of 0.557). Pearson's goodness of fit p-value, on the other hand, slightly worsens with its insignificant level of 0.842 in Model 5.1 decreasing to 0.477 in Model 5.2. More importantly, however, in Model 5.2 the partial effect of *ethnic persecution* at high rates of mobilization looses its significance, albeit its significance in Model 5.1 was only at 10%. In Model 5.3 it borders significance again at 10%.

[540] The only difference that occurred when I ran Models 6 and 8 with controls was that the variable of *poverty* lost its significance in Models 6 and 8.

[541] Even though in my base model the independent variables are not correlated among themselves, some correlations occur between interaction terms and their constituent variables (the base variables out of which the product of interaction term is composed), as well as among interaction terms themselves. This is not surprising as including an interaction (which is a product term) in a general linear model often "can drastically increase the level of collinearity" (Regina Branton, "Statistical Interaction in Multiple Regression," On-line Manual, http://www.ruf.rice.edu/~branton/interaction/faqfund.htm). This effect of multicollinearity in interactive models arises because the product term of an interaction "is an exact nonlinear function of the constituent variables" and, therefore, "correlations of the constituent variables with the product term are usually high" (Branton, "Statistical Interaction in Multiple Regression"). This is exactly what is happening in my model. In the results section I also compare VIF and tolerance (1/VIF) statistics across the models.

Table 7. Logistic Regressions of Child Recruitment with Interaction Terms

	5.1	5.2	6	7	8
Mobilization Capacity	6.824**	3.406*	1.326	3.339*	6.218**
	(3.21)	(2.01)	(2.25)	(1.92)	(2.64)
	919.656	30.144	3.766	28.191	501.699
	[1.70; 496K]	[0.59; 1.5K]	[0.05; 309.82]	[0.65; 1.2K]	[2.84; 88K]
Fighting Capacity	4.632***	2.793***	3.403**	2.815***	3.444**
	(1.74)	(1.07)	(1.35)	(1.06)	(1.35)
	102.719	16.330	30.054	16.693	31.312
	[3.39; 3.1K]	[2.01; 132.98]	[2.13; 423.69]	[2.09; 133.30]	[2.22; 441.42]
Material Capacity *Index*	-0.884	-0.314			
	(1.03)	(0.74)			
	0.413	0.731			
	[0.05; 3.11]	[0.17; 3.12]			
Diaspora Money			-3.173**		
			(1.50)		
			0.042		
			[0.00; 0.79]		
Third State Support				-1.01	
				(1.12)	
				0.364	
				[0.04; 3.27]	
Natural Resource Access					2.904**
					(1.31)
					18.247
					[1.40; 237.84]
Ethnic Persecution	-0.842	0.382	0.303	0.530	-0.511
	(1.79)	(1.18)	(1.44)	(1.10)	(1.20)
	0.431	1.465	1.354	1.699	0.600
	[0.01; 14.39]	[0.15; 14.80]	[0.08; 22.77]	[0.20; 14.67]	[0.06; 6.30]
Territorial Access	5.912***	3.409***	3.946***	3.622***	3.485**
	(2.10)	(1.29)	(1.46)	(1.31)	(1.57)
	369.444	30.235	51.728	37.412	32.622
	[6.03; 22.6K]	[2.41; 378.95]	[2.96; 904.70]	[2.87; 487.65]	[1.50; 707.83]
Interactions:					
Mobilization*Fighting	-2.782	-1.976	-0.787	-1.678	-2.712
	(2.17)	(1.49)	(1.86)	(1.51)	(1.74)
	0.062	0.139	0.455	0.187	0.066
	[0.00; 4.35]	[0.01; 2.57]	[0.01; 17.44]	[0.01; 3.60]	[0.00; 2.01]
Mobilization*Ethnic	4.312*	2.136	0.671	2.248	3.255*
	(2.38)	(1.70)	(1.93)	(1.62)	(1.75)
	74.590	8.466	1.956	9.469	25.920
	[0.70; 7.9K]	[0.30; 236.99]	[0.04; 85.95]	[0.40; 226.60]	[0.84; 800.31]
Mobilization*Material					
*Mobilization*Index*	-0.331	0.010			
	1.28	(0.91)			
	0.718	1.010			
	[0.06; 8.83]	[0.17; 6.01]			
*Mobilization*Diaspora*			7.169***		
			(2.39)		
			1298.545		
			[12; 140.5K]		
*Mobilization*3rd State*				-0.501	
				(1.53)	
				0.606	
				[0.03; 12.16]	
*Mobilization*Resources*					-4.137**
					(1.68)
					0.016
					[0.00; 0.43]
Mobilization*Territory	-4.984**	-2.799**	-3.175**	-2.554*	-2.989*
	(2.00)	(1.41)	(1.53)	(1.47)	(1.69)

	0.007	0.061	0.042	0.078	0.050
	[0.00; 0.35]	[0.00; 0.97]	[0.00; 0.84]	[0.00; 1.39]	[0.00; 1.38]
Controls:					
Poverty (log)	-0.071	-0.864	-1.668**	-0.936	-1.165*
	(0.81)	(0.59)	(0.75)	(0.60)	(0.60)
	0.931	0.421	0.189	0.392	0.312
	[0.19; 4.56]	[0.13; 1.34]	[0.04; 0.82]	[0.12; 1.27]	[0.10; 1.01]
End Before 1997	-3.345**	-1.694**	-2.550**	-2.003**	-1.618*
	(1.37)	(0.84)	(1.02)	(0.87)	(0.85)
	0.035	0.184	0.078	0.135	0.198
	[0.00; 0.52]	[0.04; 0.95]	[0.01; 0.58]	[0.02; 0.74]	[0.04; 1.05]
Conflict Duration	-0.137				
	(0.11)				
	0.872				
	[0.70; 1.08]				
Conflict Intensity	0.835				
	(1.77)				
	2.305				
	[0.07; 74.01]				
Cons	-5.370	2.308	7.838	2.726	1.858
	(7.36)	(4.36)	(5.43)	(4.44)	(4.71)
N	69	80	77	80	80
Pseudo R^2	0.57	0.43	0.53	0.45	0.50
_hatsq in linktest	0.591	0.333	0.371	0.434	0.938
Log likelh (Prob>chi2=0)	-20	-31	-24	-30	-27
Goodness-of-fit test, p-val					
Hosmer-Lemeshow	0.557	0.666	0.814	0.606	0.983
Pearson	0.842	0.477	0.774	0.693	0.859
Max VIF	9.81	7.44	8.02	6.44	6.19
Min tolerance (1/VIF)	0.10	0.13	0.12	0.16	0.16
AIC	69.05	86.26	72.66	84.13	78.13/83.99

Note: Logistic regression coefficients are marked with * when significant at 10%; ** significant at 5%; *** significant at 1%. Standard errors are reported in parentheses, and below are odds ratios and their 95% confidence intervals (in square brackets).

of Models 5-8 which exclude the constitutive variable of *mobilization capacity* (Table A in the Appendices).[542] The literature on interactions is divided in terms of advisability of inclusion of individual constitutive variables of interaction terms.[543] While some works in statistics on interaction terms advocate for inclusion of the constitutive variable into the analysis, even if it does not turn out significant, others suggest that its inclusion should be strictly motivated by theory since there is no statistical reason to include such a variable into the model.[544] My explanatory framework does not offer any theoretical support for inclusion of the variable of *mobilization capacity* on its own into the analysis, as mobilization capacity in itself by its definition should have no effect on child soldering.

Therefore, *mobilization capacity* in the exploratory Models 5*-8* appears only as a conditioning factor for other independent variables, and thus enters the models as one of the constituent variables in the interaction terms only. I do include separately into the regressions all other constituent variables that enter interaction terms with *mobilization capacity*. Even if the coefficients on these variables are insignificant, it is important to keep such variables in the model along with their interaction terms, because their own effects at certain values of *mobilization capacity* are proposed to influence *child soldiering* in my argument.

As expected, Models 5*-8* (Table A in the Appendices) have lower VIF statistics and lower tolerance statistics than Models 5-8 in Table 7. In terms of significance of factors the results obtained from Models 5*-8* exhibited two different patterns when compared to the findings from Models 5-8. First, the partial effect of *territorial access* at high mobilization rates did not score significantly in Models 5*, 7* and 8*, in line with my argument. Second, the variable of *ethnic persecution* in the case of popular armed groups gained significance in Model 7*, also offering more support to my argument. Overall, Models 5*-8* are relatively well specified with a good fit.

Comparison of Models 1-4 without interaction terms (Table 6) and Models 5-8 with interaction terms (Table 7) suggests that the latter are indeed better specified, as proposed in my extended explanatory framework differentiating between popular and unpopular armed groups. Although Models 1-4 seem to fit the data, they do so not as well as Models 5-8. For example, in Models 1-4 both Pearson's and Hosmer

[542] The exclusion of this variable implies that the model is restricted to a common intercept for the variables that interact with mobilization capacity. The theoretical reasons behind such exclusion are outlined in Chapter 4 on methodology.

[543] Constitutive variable refers to either of the two variables in the interaction term. For example, in the interaction term *Mob*Terr* one constitutive variable is *mobilization capacity (Mob)* and another one is *territorial access* (*Terr)*.

[544] For the view advocating for inclusion of the constitutive variable into a regression analysis see Thomas Brambor, William Roberts Clark, Matt Golder, "Understanding Interaction Models: Improving Empirical Analyses," *Political Analysis* 2006 14(1), pp. 63-82. These authors provide an overview of the mathematical effect from excluding constituent variables from the regression. For the opposite opinion refer to Kam and Franzese, *Modeling and Interpreting Interactive Hypotheses in Regression Analysis*, pp. 99-102. More specifically, they state: "While the rule of including x and z if including xz may be quite reasonable […] and is often practically advisable, it is neither logically not statistically strictly necessary" (p. 99).

and Lemeshow's goodness of fit p-values have lower levels than in Models 5-8. In addition, the Hosmer and Lemeshow's goodness-of-fit test in Model 2 has a significant p-value of 0.086 at 90% confidence level, indicating a mild fit problem. Even more obvious is the difference in the Pseudo R^2 values between the models with and without interactions, with the latter having much lower levels, suggesting a worse model fit. Therefore, it can be concluded that although Models 1-4 do not suffer from serious misspecification problems, they perform worse in terms of fit than their alternative full Models 5-8 with interaction terms included. As expected, this comparison demonstrates that inclusion of interaction terms into the equation generates better models of prediction of child soldier recruitment practice, as my extended explanatory theory postulates. Hence, differentiation between popular and unpopular armed groups in predicting the practice of rebel child recruitment practice is justified empirically.

***Results*.** Below I evaluate the extent to which empirical estimation of the models with interaction terms supports my extended theoretical framework which differentiates between factor effects for popular and unpopular armed groups. For this purpose, I examine the following three types of findings. First, I interpret the significance and signs of β-coefficients from logistic regressions of Models 5.2-8 with interaction terms (Table 7). Second, I elaborate on the significance of marginal effects of four predictors and controls (Table 8). Third, I comment on the results of logistic regressions of Models 2-4 from Table 7 when performed on two split datasets of popular and unpopular armed groups (Tables 9-11), as opposed to the full sample of all 112 African insurgencies. In addition to the examination of individual variables' effects, I also evaluate their relative strength in explaining child soldier recruitment by comparing the magnitude of marginal effects in Table 8.

In all four regressions of Models 5.2-8 (Table 7), the constitutive variable of ***fighting capacity*** turned out to have significant positive β-coefficients suggesting that this factor has an effect on *child soldiering* in unpopular armed groups. This finding is confirmed by positive significant marginal effects of *fighting capacity* when *mobilization capacity* is low (Table 8). The absence of significance of β-coefficients in the interaction terms and the change of their sign into negative in Models 5.2-8 (Table 7) cannot confirm a significant difference in the effect of *fighting capacity* for popular groups relative to the unpopular ones. However, the marginal effects of *fighting capacity* for popular armed groups are insignificant, pointing at the absence of any influence of *fighting capacity* on *child soldiering* for popular groups. This finding is further corroborated by the results of regressions on the split samples: β-coefficients of *fighting capacity* for armed groups with high mobilization also turned out insignificant. All these results largely support my Hypothesis 1.1 that *armed groups, especially unpopular ones, are more likely to recruit children if they operate in conflicts with intense armed struggle*.

Table 8. Marginal Effects of Predictor Variables

	1 U	1 P	2 U	2 P	3 U	3 P	4 U	4 P
Fighting Capacity	**0.554***	0.194	**0.573***	**0.574***	**0.553***	0.274	**0.602***	0.177
Material Capacity *Index*	-0.179	-0.216						
Diaspora Money			**-0.380***	**0.726***				
Third State Support					-0.186	-0.344		
Natural Resources							**0.438***	-0.290
Ethnic Persecution	0.078	**0.520***	0.047	0.237	0.108	**0.568***	-0.075	**0.555***
Territorial Access	**0.933***	0.291	**0.952***	0.366	**0.945***	0.488	**0.927***	0.240
Controls:								
Poverty	-0.233	-0.290	**-0.329***	**-0.531***	-0.246	-0.317	-0.252	-0.339
	-0.297		**-0.500***		-0.323		**-0.392***	
End Before 1997	**-0.338***	**-0.393***	**-0.410***	**-0.563***	**-0.392***	**-0.459***	-0.272	-0.311
	-0.383*		**-0.509***		**-0.442***		**-0.348***	

Note: 1) The marginal effects are marked with * when significant at 5%. 2) Models 1-4 U refer to logistic regressions on the whole sample of popular and unpopular armed groups but for which marginal effects were calculated only for unpopular insurgencies. Similarly, marginal effects in Models 1-4 P were calculated for popular armed groups. 3) These marginal effects were calculated while keeping all the variables at their mean, including binary variables. The effects for dummy variables were estimated for the change in the relevant variable from its minimum to maximum value. For the continuous variable of *poverty* marginal effects were estimated for the change from one standard deviation below the mean to one standard deviation above the mean. Means for dummy and continuous variables were computed on the two samples that correspond to low and high mobilization capacity. 4) For *poverty* and *conflict timing* variables I also calculated their marginal effects in the sample of all popular and unpopular armed groups. In this case, the means for dummy and continuous variables were computed on one sample for both popular and unpopular insurgencies.

Table 9. Logistic Regressions of Child Recruitment on Split Samples (Material Capacity Measured with Diaspora Money)

		All groups	Unpopular	Popular
Fighting Capacity		1.635**	2.821**	2.557
		(0.66)	(1.34)	(1.71)
		5.129	16.794	12.897
		[1.41; 18.70]	[1.21; 232.15]	[0.45; 368.19]
Material Capacity	(**Diaspora Money**)	0.307	-3.291**	5.591**
		(0.69)	(1.53)	(2.56)
		1.359	0.037	268.003
		[0.35; 5.26]	[0.00; 0.75]	[1.77; 40.4K]
Ethnic Persecution		1.333*	1.017	1.720
		(0.71)	(1.38)	(1.62)
		3.792	2.765	5.585
		[0.94; 15.25]	[0.18; 41.34]	[0.23; 133.65]
Territorial Access		1.530***	4.690***	-0.027
		(0.50)	(1.75)	(1.27)
		4.618	108.853	0.973
		[1.73; 12.30]	[3.53; 3.3K]	[0.08; 11.73]
Controls:				
Poverty (log)		-0.824*	-0.112	-3.324**
		(0.49)	(1.08)	(1.51)
		0.439	0.894	0.036
		[0.17; 1.15]	[0.11; 7.42]	[0.00; 0.69]
End Before 1997		-1.937***	-2.349*	-2.153
		(0.66)	(1.29)	(1.92)
		0.144	0.095	0.116
		[0.04; 0.53]	[0.01; 1.20]	[0.00; 5.00]
Cons		3.724	-3.397	20.95**
		(3.39)	(8.08)	(10.60)
N		80	47	30
Pseudo R^2		0.32	0.60	0.51
_hatsq in linktest		0.930	0.986	0.792
Log likelh (Prob>chi2=0)		-37	-12	-10
Hosmer-Lemeshow Goodness-of-fit test, p-value		0.082	0.837	0.747
Pearson Goodness-of-fit test, p-value		0.463	0.956	0.726
Max VIF		1.41	1.15	2.28
Min tolerance (1/VIF)		0.71	0.87	0.45
AIC		87.73	38.41	33.82

Note: Logistic regression coefficients are marked with * when significant at 10%; ** significant at 5%; *** significant at 1%. Standard errors are reported in parentheses, and below are odds ratios with their 95% confidence intervals (in square brackets).

Table 10. Logistic Regressions of Child Recruitment on Split Samples (Material Capacity Measured with Third State Support)

		All groups	Unpopular	Popular
Fighting Capacity		1.744***	2.664**	0.720
		(0.63)	(1.10)	(1.09)
		5.720	14.354	2.054
		[1.66; 19.66]	[1.66; 123.97]	[0.24; 17.40]
Material Capacity	(**Third State Support**)	-1.102	-1.097	-1.184
		(0.74)	(1.23)	(1.17)
		0.332	0.334	0.306
		[0.08; 1.42]	[0.03; 3.72]	[0.03; 3.03]
Ethnic Persecution		1.887***	0.572	2.964**
		(0.71)	(1.15)	(1.32)
		6.600	1.772	19.375
		[1.64; 26.54]	[0.19; 16.88]	[1.46; 257.55]
Territorial Access		2.105***	3.997***	0.512
		(0.65)	(1.45)	(0.97)
		8.207	54.435	1.669
		[2.30; 29.34]	[3.17; 933.56]	[0.25; 11.17]
Controls:				
Poverty (log)		-0.816	-0.3619	-1.427*
		(0.50)	(1.01)	(0.80)
		0.442	0.696	0.240
		[0.17; 1.18]	[0.10; 5.04]	[0.05; 1.15]
End Before 1997		-2.453***	-2.295**	-1.205
		(0.77)	(1.27)	(1.23)
		0.086	0.101	0.300
		[0.02; 0.39]	[0.01; 1.21]	[0.03; 3.34]
Cons		3.845	-1.337	9.792
		(3.52)	(7.44)	(6.02)
N		83	49	31
Pseudo R^2		0.37	0.53	0.34
_hatsq in linktest		0.844	0.390	0.502
Log likelh (Prob>chi2=0)		-36	-15	-14
Hosmer-Lemeshow Goodness-of-fit test, p-value		0.565	0.741	0.541
Pearson Goodness-of-fit test, p-value		0.573	0.659	0.407
Max VIF		1.66	1.69	1.94
Min tolerance (1/VIF)		0.61	0.59	0.52
AIC		86.18	44.89	41.77

Note: Logistic regression coefficients are marked with * when significant at 10%; ** significant at 5%; *** significant at 1%. Standard errors are reported in parentheses, and below are odds ratios with their 95% confidence intervals (in square brackets).

Table 11. Logistic Regressions of Child Recruitment on Split Samples (Material Capacity Measured with Natural Resource Access)

		All groups	Unpopular	Popular
Fighting Capacity		1.564**	3.260**	0.519
		(0.61)	(1.35)	(1.07)
		4.778	26.050	1.680
		[1.45; 15.79]	[1.85; 367.23]	[0.21; 13.68]
Material Capacity	(**Natural Resource Access**)	0.562	2.763**	-1.128
		(0.61)	(1.34)	(1.07)
		1.754	15.847	0.324
		[0.53; 5.80]	[1.15; 219.07]	[0.04; 2.64]
Ethnic Persecution		1.509**	-0.316	2.952**
		(0.66)	(1.22)	(1.34)
		4.522	0.729	19.144
		[1.24; 16.49]	[0.07; 7.97]	[1.38; 264.65]
Territorial Access		1.472***	3.711**	0.264
		(0.53)	(1.63)	(0.87)
		4.358	40.895	1.302
		[1.54; 12.31]	[1.68; 998.05]	[0.24; 7.16]
Controls:				
Poverty (log)		-0.869*	-0.762	-1.495*
		(0.51)	(0.89)	(0.83)
		0.419	0.467	0.224
		[0.15; 1.14]	[0.08; 2.67]	[0.04; 1.14]
End Before 1997		-1.92***	-1.778	-1.279
		(0.67)	(1.16)	(1.24)
		0.147	0.169	0.278
		[0.04; 0.55]	[0.02; 1.64]	[0.02; 3.16]
Cons		3.914	-0.945	10.52*
		(3.55	(6.62)	(6.22)
N		83	49	31
Pseudo R^2		0.35	59	0.34
_hatsq in linktest		0.877	0.723	0.442
Log likelh (Prob>chi2=0)		-37	-13	-14
Hosmer-Lemeshow Goodness-of-fit test, p-value		0.736	0.997	0.640
Pearson Goodness-of-fit test, p-value		0.553	0.950	0.327
Max VIF		1.36	1.77	1.44
Min tolerance (1/VIF)		0.74	0.57	0.69
AIC		87.72	39.92	41.67

Note: Logistic regression coefficients are marked with * when significant at 10%; ** significant at 5%; *** significant at 1%. Standard errors are reported in parentheses, and below are odds ratios with their 95% confidence intervals (in square brackets).

The results of empirical analysis show that the effect of the ***material capacity*** variable differs depending on its measurement. More specifically, when represented by a cumulative index of all three types of material support that rebels might receive, or by the index of third state support alone, *material capacity* proved to be only a weak predictor of child soldiering. Thus, in this case for both popular and unpopular armed groups the β-coefficients (Table 7) and the marginal effects (Table 8) of *material capacity* are insignificant, and so are β-coefficients for the third state support index in the regressions on split datasets in Table 10. Altogether, the results for the index measure of *material capacity* offer no

support to my Hypothesis 2.1 which specifies that *unpopular armed groups offering material rewards to their members are less likely to have children in their ranks.*

When measured by diaspora support or access to natural resources, however, the results obtained from my analysis tell a different story. When *mobilization capacity* is low, *β*-coefficient of *material capacity* measured by diaspora support in Model 6 (Table 7) scored significantly and negative. The significant negative marginal effect of the variable for unpopular groups (Table 8) and *β*-coefficient from the split sample analysis (Table 9) both support this finding. The *β*-coefficient on the interaction term *mobilization*diaspora* (Table 7) was also significant, suggesting a change in the magnitude of the effect. Moreover, the sign of the coefficient appeared positive. The large positive and significant marginal effect and *β*-coefficient from split sample analysis of *material capacity* measured in diaspora support both match the above result. All these findings suggest that diaspora funding has the opposite effect on child soldiering for popular and unpopular armed groups. In the case of unpopular insurgencies, the increase in diaspora support reduces the probability of child soldiering, thus offering support to my Hypothesis 2.1. In the case of popular groups, however, the presence of diaspora money is positively associated with recruitment of minors – an outcome that my explanatory framework has not anticipated.

As further evidenced in Table 7, *β*-coefficients for *material capacity* measured by access to natural resources are also significant for low and high mobilization capacity, but with the opposite signs. When *mobilization capacity* is low, *β*-coefficient of *natural resource access* in Model 8 (Table 7) scored as significant and positive, and so did the marginal effect (Table 8) and split sample *β*-coefficient (Table 11) of this variable for unpopular groups. *β*-coefficient of the interaction term *mobilization*resources* was also significant but negative, suggesting a change in the magnitude of the effect of *material capacity* at high *mobilization capacity* relative to low. The negative marginal effect (Table 8) and split sample *β*-coefficient (Table 11) of *material capacity* measured in access to resources were not significant for high mobilization capacity, though.[545] Overall, these results suggest that access to natural resources is positively associated with child soldiering in the case of unpopular groups. This finding does not fully agree with the proposition in my argument. Hence, my Hypothesis 2.1 may not hold if the material compensation to the armed group members comes from natural resource revenues. In case of popular groups, however, access to natural resources is likely to have no effect on child soldiering, as proposed in my argument.

When *mobilization capacity* is low, *β*-coefficients of ***ethnic persecution*** are insignificant in all the models. They gain significance on interaction terms of *mobilization capacity* with *ethnic persecution*,

[545] This insignificance occurs because *β*-coefficients on *natural resource access* in Model 8 (Table 7) and its interaction term with *mobilization capacity* have opposite signs, which results in canceling out of the partial effect of *material capacity* when mobilization is high.

however, in one out of four models (Model 8 in Table 7), suggesting the possibility of a difference in the effect of *ethnic persecution* (i.e. the presence of the effect) in the case of popular armed groups.[546] Indeed, when mobilization is high, the marginal effects of *ethnic persecution* are significant and positive in all but one model (Table 8).[547] When mobilization is low, the marginal effects of *ethnic persecution* are not significant. The results of the regressions on the split samples (Tables 9-11) largely support this pattern by exhibiting significant β-coefficients of *ethnic persecution* for popular armed groups in two out of three models (Tables 10 and 11), and insignificant β-coefficients for unpopular groups in all the models.[548] Overall, these results provide support for my Hypothesis 3.1: *popular armed groups that operate in conflicts with ethnic persecution are more likely to have children.*

In all interactive models in Table 7, β-coefficients of the constituent variable ***territorial access*** scored positive and significant, which indicates that *territorial access* has a positive and significant effect on *child soldering* when *mobilization capacity* is low. This outcome is confirmed by significant, positive and very large marginal effects (Table 8) and split sample β-coefficients (Tables 9-11) of *territorial access* for low mobilization. β-coefficients of the interaction term *mobilization*territory* (Table 7) scored significantly in all four interactive models of interest (Models 5.2-8), implying a change in the effect of the variable of *territorial access* on child soldiering for the high value of *mobilization capacity*.[549] The marginal effects of *territorial access* and split sample β-coefficients for popular armed groups all score insignificantly with predominantly positive signs.[550] All these results suggest that the factor of *territorial access* might not have an effect on *child soldiering* in the case of popular armed groups, as predicted. Overall, the findings support my Hypothesis 4.1 stating that *unpopular armed groups with access to larger territories are more likely to recruit children.*

β-coefficients for the ***poverty*** variable were negative and significant in two (Models 6 and 8) out of four models in Table 7.[551] The marginal effects of *poverty* were also found to be negative and significant in two out of four models (Models 2 and 4 in Table 8). When calculated separately for low and high

[546] *Ethnic persecution* also turned out significant in Model 5.1, a version of Model 5.2 with all control variables, as well as Model 7* which excludes the interaction's constitutive term of *mobilization capacity*.
[547] Insignificance of the marginal effect of *ethnic persecution* in Model 2 in Table 8 can be a result of collinearity between *ethnic persecution* and *material capacity* measured in diaspora support – the link that I comment on below in the discussion of results.
[548] Similarly to the insignificance of the marginal effects, the insignificance of β-coefficients of *ethnic persecution* for popular armed groups in Tables 7 and 9 can be a result of collinearity between *ethnic persecution* and *material capacity* measured in diaspora support – the link that I discuss below in this section in the discussion of results.
[549] In the exploratory Models 5*-8* (Table A in the Appendices) without the interaction's constitutive term of *mobilization capacity* the variable of *territorial access* scored insignificant in three out of four model specifications (Models 5*, 7* and 8*) for popular armed groups.
[550] The only negative sign was observed in split sample analysis on Model 6 with diaspora money measure for *material capacity* (Table 9).
[551] Note, however, that this effect disappears when these Models are run with control variables of *conflict duration* and *conflict intensity*.

mobilization capacity, the marginal effects of *poverty* turned out significant only in one model out of four models for both popular and unpopular armed groups, suggesting a potentially similar effect (when present) of this factor for low and high mobilization capacity. The analysis on split samples, however, showed that β-coefficients of *poverty* were significant in all three models and for popular groups only (Tables 9-11).[552] Overall, Hypothesis 5 received a rather weak and inconsistent support by the data.

The control variable of ***conflict timing*** proved to be significant in all regression models in Table 7, and its marginal effects were also found to be significant for all the models (Table 8). It is interesting to note, though, that β-coefficients for *conflict timing* proved to be insignificant in regressions on the sub-sample of popular armed groups, suggesting that child soldiers' increasing appearance in newer wars is not straightforward. Rather, it appears as conditional on a type of actors involved in conflict. More specifically, recent wars that involve unpopular armed movements are more likely to have child soldiers.[553] Hypothesis 6, therefore, was largely supported by the data. β-coefficients on the control variables of ***conflict duration*** and ***conflict intensity*** exhibited non-significant results (Table 7).[554] Thus, Hypotheses 7 and 8 were not supported by the data.

The Relative Size of Predictors' Strength

After evaluating which factors are affecting the probability of child recruitment, I also explore if some of them turn out to be stronger predictors than others.[555] The marginal effects of variables in Models 1-4 (Table 8) suggest that the strongest predictor of child soldiering for ***unpopular*** groups is *territorial access*. Unpopular groups that have access to large areas of territory are up to 90% more likely to recruit children than unpopular groups without territorial access. The two factors that follow in the order of importance for unpopular groups are *fighting capacity* and *material capacity*. An increase of an unpopular group's *fighting capacity* from low to high boosts its propensity to recruit children by about 50%. The *material capacity* variable seems to be the weakest from the proposed factors: when a group is unpopular, its ability to compensate its fighters decreases its propensity to recruit children by about 40%. When the effect of *poverty* is significant in one model specification, the country wealth decreases the propensity of an unpopular armed group to recruit children by about 30%.

In the case of ***popular*** groups, *ethnic persecution* seems to have the largest effect on child soldiering, increasing its probability by about 50%. Only in one model specification, in which *material capacity* is

[552] This result is discussed in more detail further below in this chapter.
[553] This result is discussed in more detail further below in this chapter.
[554] Control variables were not included into Models 6-8, the results of which are shown in Table 7. However, I ran regressions on the Models 6-8 with these controls as well, and the results were not different, except for the fact that *poverty* was not significant in the fuller version of Models 6 and 8. Hence, models with these two controls performed worse than the ones without them.
[555] Since all of my independent variables except *poverty* are dummy or categorical variables, I can directly compare the magnitude of their marginal effects.

measured by diaspora support, an increase of a popular group's *fighting capacity* from low to high was found to raise insurgents' propensity to recruit children significantly by about 60%. Similarly, the marginal effect of *material capacity* in case of popular groups proved to be significant only in the case of diaspora support, but with a high degree of approximately 70% increase in child soldier probability. However, as I discuss below, this effect could have been inflated by a high collinearity between *ethnic persecution* and *diaspora support*. *Poverty* increased the probability of child enlistment by 50% in one model specification only. Finally, all insurgent groups (popular and unpopular) that participated in older conflicts that finished before 1997 were about 40% less likely to have child soldiers.

Section 2. Discussion of Results

Overall, the outcomes of my large-*N* statistical analysis support my argument. However, some findings deviate to a certain extent from the proposed hypotheses and as such deserve further discussion. Perhaps the most interesting are the outcomes concerning the ***material capacity***. The absence of an effect of this variable on *child soldiering* when I did not distinguish between different popularity levels of armed groups in my analysis contrasts with the presence of *material capacity*'s influence on the dependent variable when the differences in the popularity levels of insurgencies are taken into account. The fact that for two types of popular and unpopular armed groups the cumulative index of all measures of *material capacity* has no effect on *child soldiering* (unlike diaspora support money and access to natural resources) suggests that the type of material support matters for child recruitment, and that different mechanisms might be at work for each of them, as I discuss below.

The finding about ***diaspora support***'s potential positive association with *child soldiering* in the case of popular movements appeared surprising at first. On the one hand, I proposed that additional revenue of unpopular armed groups should increase the probability of insurgency to pay and attract adult soldiers who would not join unpopular movements. On the other hand, for popular movements my extended theoretical framework did not postulate any influence of the group's material capacity. An explanation for this unanticipated result may follow from the mechanics of the logistic regression. Note that when models which I was estimating included the measure of diaspora support and when the latter scored significantly, *ethnic persecution* lost the significance of its β-coefficients and marginal effects, compared to the models that used other measures of *material capacity*.[556] This outcome may result from collinearity of the variable of *ethnic persecution* with *material capacity* measured in diaspora support money. A theoretical argument for such a potential correlation can indeed be found in the literature. As one study on rebel financing suggests, "the increasing number of ethnic or communal insurgencies relative to ideological

[556] Hereby by considering models which include the measure of diaspora support I refer to Model 6 in Table 7; Model 2 in Table 8; and Models 2 and 3 in Table 9. Note that when in Model 2 in Table 6 diaspora support did not score significantly, the *ethnic persecution* variable did.

conflicts increases the relative prevalence of diaspora support."[557] This is precisely why Latin American military organizations are believed not to receive much of diaspora support – that is because ethnic insurgencies "in general are rare" on the continent.[558]

The correlation coefficient between *ethnic persecution* and *material capacity* measured in diaspora money is, in fact, rather high for Model 6 in Table 7 and Model 2 in Table 8 (0.41). When estimated on a smaller split samples of popular movements, for example, as opposed to the original dataset of 112 African insurgent episodes, the correlation coefficient becomes even higher (0.53). However, the correlation coefficient between the two variables drops to an acceptable level of 0.35 for Model 2 in Table 6, where the ratio of the number of observations to the number of variables is the highest.[559] Interestingly, in this particular model *ethnic persecution* retains the significance of its β-coefficient, whereas *material capacity* measured in diaspora support does not. Therefore, I believe that the unexpected effect of diaspora support money on *child soldiering* for popular armed groups occurs due to the collinearity of this measurement of *material capacity* with *ethnic persecution* variable and, as such, should be either disregarded or interpreted with caution.

Another interesting finding worth noting among the results was that the *material capacity* variable measured in the ***third state support*** did not yield any significant effect on child soldiering. The assumptions which I made regarding this particular measure in Chapter 4 on methodology, however, could potentially explain this lack of significance. More specifically, I assumed that despite the fact that states' support comes mainly in the form of military assistance, as opposed to direct funding, this concept could still be used to represent armed groups' *material capacity*. This is because insurgencies after receiving a third state's military and logistical assistance might be relieved from the burden of purchasing arms and ammunition on the competitive basis from international markets. Instead, they could redistribute these saved financial resources to group members in the form of salaries. It is possible that this assumption might not hold for all insurgencies, especially if we imagine an armed group which has no other access to material resources but the third state support. In a sense, the third state support measure is probably the least precise indication of the actual financial solvency of a military organization, compared to the index of access to the easily cashed natural resources or diaspora's direct monetary assistance. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the sign of all insignificant β-coefficients (Tables 7 and 10) and marginal effects (Table 8) of the *third state support* was negative, indicating the proposed direction in the otherwise insignificant relationship.

[557] Byman et. al., *Trends in Outside Support for Insurgent Movements*, p. 42.
[558] Ibid., p. 41.
[559] The correlation coefficient between 0.4 and 0.6 is usually regarded as the benchmark value above which multicollinearity can pose a problem.

More controversial are the results of the *material capacity* variable when measured by ***access to natural resources***. In the case of unpopular armed groups, for which pecuniary rewards were proposed to have a negative effect on *child soldiering*, *material capacity* had significant and positive β-coefficients (Table 7 and 11) and marginal effects (Table 8), suggesting that insurgents' access to natural resources might actually lead to underage recruitment. The positive direction of this relationship has not been postulated in my hypothesis. Closer examination reveals a potential explanation though. It is possible that besides generating revenue to armed groups, access to natural resources also cultivates personal greed within military organizations. Unlike in the case of diaspora money which ends up in the hands of the highest leadership of the rebel movement, revenue generated from diamond mining or drug production is less prone to hierarchical control. Any low-ranking commander may have access to production, supervision, transportation or looting of natural resources, and thus profit from the commodity in question either openly or clandestinely. The logic of this argument is reflected to some extent in existing literature on conflict and armed movements. Thus, previous studies have noted the negative impact of rebels' access to revenues from natural resources on the wide-spread private profiteering and trust and discipline within the insurgency.[560] There are two underlying mechanisms behind this relationship.

In his book Jeremy Weinstein, while unpacking his overall argument about violence against civilians during the war, postulates that armed groups with access to natural resources (resource-based organizations) end up having greedy profiteers (attract opportunists) who care about short-term benefits, not the overall purpose of the organization.[561] Similarly to Weinstein, I also find it plausible that armed groups having access to natural resources will attract greedy personnel who would become interested in immediate personal gain more than the ultimate common goal of the military organization. Unlike Weinstein, however, I assume that such a pursuit will occur only in unpopular resource-based organizations, and not in the popular ones. Meanwhile, as my data demonstrates, there is no correlation between popularity and *material capacity* (measured by all four different indicators in my analysis).

Second, as also argued by Weinstein, establishing military discipline and institutional checks and balances within armed groups not based on ideational endowments is difficult.[562] On the contrary, more ideational (or popular) armed groups are more likely to be able to institutionalize the checks and balances on the behavior and, as a result, the long-term commitment of their fighters.[563] Although in my argument resource-based and ideational-based armed groups are mot mutually exclusive, I also assume that

[560] These works focused mostly on diamonds and include United Nations (UN), *Report of the Panel of Experts Appointed Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1306 (2000*), Paragraph 19, in Relation to Sierra Leone (New York: United Nations, 2000); Le Billon, "The Political Ecology of War"; David Keen, *Conflict and Collusion in Sierra Leone* (Oxford, U.K.: James Currey, 2005), cited in Le Billon, "Diamond Wars?" p. 362.
[561] Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion*, pp. 139, 171.
[562] Ibid., p. 139.
[563] Ibid., p. 139.

unpopular insurgencies are harder to discipline.[564] Consider, for instance, how in Angola and Sierra Leone uncommitted "government troops have abandoned their military duty to search for diamonds, with individual soldiers or officers leaving their posts after a significant finding, or trading with the enemy."[565] In sharp contrast, the Angolan UNITA, which is recorded as a popular armed group in my sample, avoided the problem of profiteering among local commanders "by prohibiting its soldiers from participating in mining and employing mostly Congolese diggers and foreign buyers."[566] The above belief is also supported by the data in my sample that shows a statistically significant difference between popularity of a group and the strength of its center, measured as a categorical index of the extent to which the top leadership of the movement can control its troops and thus discipline within the organization.[567]

It follows from the above discussion, I argue, that recruitment of low ranking personnel for unpopular armed groups might conform to the same profiteering logic whereby enriching commanders might not be willing to share their personal revenues with any additional new fighters required to achieve the overall goals of the group. In other words, local commanders might not want any lower ranking personnel to report or join their clandestine monetary operations. In this case, I would argue, children could become the best candidates to fill in the lower ranking positions in the army: unlike adults, they can be easily manipulated to obedience and loyalty without pay. Therefore, without the need to share their personal revenues, as opposed to the organizational resources that are boosted from diaspora money or other financial transactions to the central leadership, the local commanders can avail themselves of cheap and loyal underage personnel of child soldiers.[568]

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[564] Unpopular groups in my argument – the ones that do not attract personnel on ideational grounds – resemble military organizations organized around ideational endowments from Weinstein's argument. However, in Weinstein's book these insurgencies are believed to be the ones without access to material resources, and are measured as such in his empirical study. Unlike Weinstein, however, I assume that military organizations based on ideational endowments may still have access to material resources, and, therefore, I use other criteria than access to material resources to distinguish between ideational and non-ideational armed groups (in my case popular and unpopular ones).

[565] Le Billon, "Diamond Wars?" p. 362, citing his interview with diamond buyer in Angola, July 2001 and Keen, *Conflict and Collusion in Sierra Leone*.

[566] Le Billon, "Diamond Wars?" p. 362, Filip De Boeck, "Garimpeiro Worlds: Digging, Dying and "Hunting" for Diamonds in Angola," *Review of African Political Economy* 28 (90), 2001, pp. 549–62.

[567] Reported p-value of the chi-square coefficient is 0.017. The data to measure the strength of the central leadership were taken form the NSA Project Dataset. "This variable gives a categorical indicator, measured as "high, moderate, or low" of the strength of the leadership's control over its forces. An example of a group with a high degree of control would be the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) in Mexico, where Subcommander Marcos was at the top of a clear chain of command in a well-organized group. An example of a group with low control of its forces is the Rally for Congolese Democracy (RCD) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which did have a central command organizational structure, but was beset by constant fractionalization and leadership disputes" (Cunningham and Gleditsch, "The NSA Project," pp. 5-6.)

[568] Here is where my argument turned to be largely different from the Weinstein's explanation of civilian violence. Like Weinstein, I first did not distinguish between different types of material resources the insurgencies relied on. However, as the data demonstrated, the type of material resources rebels depend on does matter, at least for the patterns of (child) recruitment.

The same logic should not apply to the popular armed groups, however. Since recruitment of adults into such movements draws on their popularity, resort to child recruitment might be non-strategic, as it undermines the support of the domestic population and thus mass voluntary mobilization of adults. Moreover, with higher control exhibited by the central leadership of popular groups over their soldiers, the normative standard not to recruit children for war can actually be upheld through the ability to monitor and regulate the behavior of the lower-ranking commanders and soldiers. This argument is supported by the data, which shows no significant β-coefficient (Table 11) or marginal effect (Table 8) for *access to natural resources* when mobilization is high. Significance of the negative β-coefficient on the interaction term *mobilization*resources* in Model 8 of Table 7 represents the changes from the positive effect of *natural resource access* with the increase in groups' mobilization capacity to its insignificance. Thus, the logic behind recruiting children of unpopular groups with access to natural resources does not apply to popular armed movements.

Additional empirical findings revealed further trends which were also not proposed in my explanatory framework. For example, ***poverty***, albeit only in a small number of model specifications (Models 6 and 8 in Table 7), was found to affect *child soldiering*. This result is not particularly perplexing, because the relationship is not too strong and because, although it was not proposed as a key factor in my theory, there has been some theoretical justification offered for this variable in the literature. There may be an intuitive explanation for an occasional effect of *poverty* in some models for both popular and unpopular insurgencies. Thus, *poverty*, similar to *ethnic persecution*, may represent a legitimate reason for armed groups to accept children without jeopardizing the popularity of the movement, if the population regards soldiering as a better option relative to the dire deprivation a child is facing otherwise. Similarly, as I suggested elsewhere, poor communities might have lower capacity to defend themselves during the war, and, as such, poverty can facilitate the entry of children into armed groups in the situations of ethnic persecution for both popular and unpopular armed groups.

The control variable of ***conflict timing*** was also observed to exhibit an interesting behavior. The results suggested that child soldiers might appear in greater proportions in new wars only under a certain condition – that is if the armed movements are unpopular. This result might reflect what I have argued earlier in Chapter 3 on the explanatory framework when questioning the ability of *conflict timing* in itself to explain child soldiering. Thus, I mentioned that the time of conflict is important only to the extent that the values of all four independent variables in my argument change over time.[569] More specifically, the

[569] For example, the mean value for the variable of *fighting capacity* for armed groups that operated after 1997 was 0.49 – an increase of 20% from the mean of 0.41 for groups that ceased to exist prior to 1997. Similarly, the mean values of the variable *territorial access* by unpopular groups rose from 0.71 to 0.91. *Ethnic persecution* values also increased in case of popular groups from the mean of 0.24 to 0.48 for pre-1997 and post-1997 groups respectively.

values of the variables of *fighting capacity*, *material capacity*, *ethnic persecution* and *territorial access*, all proposed in my argument to explain the recruitment of children into unpopular armed groups, increased with time. Meanwhile, the variable of *poverty,* which turned out to be a strong predictor of *child soldiering* in the case of popular armed groups, did not exhibit any correlation with time. This may explain the difference in the degree of the *conflict timing* variable's explanatory power for popular and unpopular armed groups.

Section 3. Methodological Caveat

Endogeneity. For practically any quantitative research project on non-experimental data in the social sciences it is difficult to avoid a potential *endogeneity* problem. *Endogeneity* generally refers to a situation when some variables are determined by other variables in the system.[570] However, endogeneity may or may not pose a problem in any given study. Statisticians identify two major sources of endogeneity that might make interpretation of the regression results problematic: 1) *omitted variable bias* and 2) *reverse causality*.[571] *Omitted variable bias* in regression coefficients occurs due to an exclusion from the model of a variable which is correlated with one of the independent variables in the system and the dependent variable, "so that after fitting the model […] there is still a relationship with this other variable and the residuals."[572] Arguably, this is the most common occurrence of the endogeneity problem in the quantitative studies.[573] *Reverse causality* refers to the situation whereby the dependent variable (DV) "might exert a causal effect" on the independent variable (IV), "in addition to (or instead of) the effect of" the IV on the DV.[574] This is what political scientists most often refer to as *the* endogeneity problem.[575]

The variable of *material compensation* also increased over time, from 0.66 to 0.85, although this trend should have been correlated with lower levels of child soldiers.

[570] Aaron Gullickson, Section "Addressing 'Endogeneity'" in *Lecture Outline for Sociology G4075: Introduction to Social Data Analysis II*, URL: http://www.uoregon.edu/~aarong/teaching/G4075_Outline/node9.html

[571] Gullickson, "Addressing 'Endogeneity'." A third source of endogeneity might include mismeasurement of the independent variable (Gary Kleck, Tomislav Kovandzic, Mark E Schaffer, "Gun Prevalence, Homicide Rates and Causality: A GMM Approach to Endogeneity Bias," *CEPR Discussion Paper* No.5357, 2005, URL: http://ideas.repec.org/p/cpr/ceprdp/5357.html). Since satisfactory remedies for this source of endogeneity are virtually non-existent, I take the data available as given and do not discuss this potential source further.

[572] Gullickson, "Addressing 'Endogeneity'." "The term *omitted variable* refers to any variable not included as an independent variable in the regression that might influence the dependent variable… So long as the omitted variables are uncorrelated with the included independent variables, OLS regression will produce unbiased estimates… When omitted variables are in fact correlated with the included independent variables… OLS regression generally produces biased and inconsistent estimates, which accounts for the name omitted variable bias" (Humberto Barreto, Frank Howland, Chapter 18 in online manual of *Introductory Econometrics: Using Monte Carlo Simulation with Microsoft Excel* (Cambridge, Mass.: Cambridge University Press, 2005), URL: http://www3.wabash.edu/econometrics/EconometricsBook/chap18.htm).

[573] Gullickson, "Addressing 'Endogeneity'."

[574] Bryan Dowd, Robert Town, *Does X Really Causes Y?* (Academy Health, Changes in Health Care Financing and Organization, 2002), p.3.

[575] In political science endogeneity "means that the values our explanatory variables take on are sometimes a consequence, rather than a cause, of our dependent variable" (Gary King, Robert Keohane, Sidney Verba, *Designing*

Presence of endogeneity can lead to a bias on estimated coefficients in a regression and might therefore result in unreliable inference. The following statement stresses the importance of addressing the issue of endogeneity in statistical analysis: "The problem of endogeneity is a real one and it behooves us to take a look at some of the ways in which people (partially) address it. The bottom line is that no method can perfectly recover causality from observational data, but in certain cases we can effectively reduce the range of plausible counter-stories."[576]

A widely used method for addressing endogeneity when caused by either omitted variables or reverse causality is the Instrumental Variables approach.[577] This approach uses a so-called *instrument* which is a variable that itself does not belong to the explanatory equation but is correlated with the endogenous explanatory variables of the model being estimated. At the same time, the instrument must not be correlated with the error term of the regression so that the instrument itself does not suffer from the endogeneity problem. In other words, the instrument serves as an intermediary variable in the regression. It first acts as a dependent variable, extracting the exogenous variation from the endogenous explanatory variable, and then effectively becomes a substitute for the endogenous explanatory variable, conveying only the exogenous information. The instrument thus parses away the endogenous part of the explanatory variable in question. The resulting coefficient estimates have the same desirable large sample properties as the ones obtained from a regression with fully exogenous explanatory variables.[578]

Reverse Causality. It could be argued that in my model specification there are independent variables that could be endogenous by reverse causality to the dependent variable of *child soldering*. I argue that endogeneity might plausibly affect in this way only the *fighting capacity* variable. Thus, one might suggest that presence of children in rebel ranks can increase (if children provide necessary numbers or necessary quality of good foot soldiers) or, equally, decrease (if children cannot perform the combat roles as well as adults) the ability of an armed group to challenge its opponent militarily.

One might argue that recruitment of children might also boost *mobilization capacity* of an armed group. However, recall that the measurement of this variable represents potential rather than the actual numbers of people mobilized and, therefore, stands for the size of the group constituency, not the groups' strength.[579] Defined as such, this measure, I argue, does not pose an endogeneity problem. The remaining three variables from my argument, namely *ethnic persecution, material capacity* and *territorial access*, can be safely regarded as exogenous, since these variables cannot be plausibly caused by *child soldiering* itself. To address endogeneity caused by reverse causality, I verify the assumed direction of the

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Social Inquiry: *Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1994), p. 185).

[576] Ibid., p. 185.

[577] Gullickson, "Addressing 'Endogeneity'."

[578] Judea Pearl, *Causality: Models, Reasoning, and Inference* (Cambridge University Press, 2000).

[579] From my correspondence with Kristian Gleditsch, one of the leaders of the NSA project (January 3, 2009).

relationship in my temporal qualitative analysis of the NPFL armed group case study based on the survey analysis and interviews which showed that changes in my explanatory variable of *fighting capacity* precede corresponding changes in *child soldiering*.

Omitted Variable Bias. In my model specification I included all the variables that I deemed to be important for explaining child soldiering according to my theoretical argument. Nonetheless, it may be possible that some unobserved factor could affect some of the variation in both my explanatory variables and the explained one. Similarly to the reverse causality case, the *fighting capacity* variable appears to be the most susceptible to the influence of such a factor. At the same time, it is hard to identify other potential unspecified factors that may affect both decision making regarding the child soldier recruitment outcome and my remaining independent variables. Any potential causes of the structural factor of *ethnic persecution* and the variable of *territorial access* should be among the features of conflict dynamics. However, no such potential feature appears sufficiently influential for child soldier recruitment beyond the already specified factor of group's *fighting capacity* and controls of *conflict duration*, *conflict timing* and *conflict intensity*. The *material capacity* variable when measured as access to natural resources should be completely exogenous and dictated mostly by the geography of violence. Material support for armed groups in the form of *diaspora* or *third state assistance* is also hardly conceivable to be affected by some omitted variable that also directly causes child soldiering beyond its influence through the included explanatory variables.

To double-check that such a potential omitted variable does not cause a problem of endogeneity, I ran an instrumental variable regression, instrumenting for *fighting capacity*, arguably with the strongest potential for departure from the exogeneity. The instrumental variable is the categorical index of group's *arms procurement* capacity, defined as the ability of insurgents (relative to the government) to obtain weapons.[580] The data for this variable was taken from the NSA Project Dataset. The *arms procurement* variable in this case meets the requirement for a suitable instrument, being a variable that itself does not belong to the explanatory equation but is correlated with the potentially endogenous explanatory variable. First, it is theoretically plausible that *fighting capacity* of a group is determined by its ability to procure arms, which is confirmed by the correlation of these two variables (the correlation coefficient is 0.82). Second, I believe that *arms procurement* capability is not caused by any omitted variable that also determines the child recruitment but is not present in my model.

[580] Armed groups vary in their ability to procure arms. "An example of an insurgent with high arms procurement capacity, relative to the government, is a military faction in Argentina which overthrew the government in a coup d'etat. Meanwhile, there are many rebel groups with a lesser ability to procure arms such as Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) in Papua New Guinea, whose main access to arms are weapons that are still leftover on the island from World War II" (Cunningham and Gleditsch, "The NSA Project Codebook," pp. 6-7).

Table 12 contrasts the results of regular regressions without instruments on Model 1 (Table 6) and Model 5.2 (Table 7) with their counterparts containing instrumental variable of *arms procurement*. The estimated coefficients are very similar in both cases and the pattern of significance does not change with the use of the instrument, except on one exogenous variable, suggesting that endogeneity does not pose a concern.[581] This is confirmed by the Wald test of exogeneity where null cannot be rejected at 5% level of significance.[582] I also ran regressions with the same instrumental variable of *arms procurement* on Models 6-8 from Table 7, featuring alternative measures of *material capacity* variable, with the same conclusion.[583]

[581] The change occurs from non-significant to significant at 10% for the interaction term of *mobilization*ethnic*. Both constituent variables of the interaction term are argued to be exogenous and hence this change is not relevant for assessing a potential endogeneity problem.

[582] The null hypothesis of the Wald test of exogeneity is that the suspect independent variable (*fighting capacity* in my case) is exogenous, conditional on the choice of the instrumental variable (*arms procurement* in my case). Failure to reject the null means that endogeneity does not pose a problem for the independent variable in question (Jeffrey Wooldridge, *Econometric Analysis of Cross Section and Panel Data* (Cambridge, Mass: The MIT Press, 2002), pp. 472-477).

[583] I obtained very similar coefficients from regressions with and without the instrumental variable. Models 6 (with *diaspora money*) had the same pattern of significance. Model 7 (with *third state support* measure) had the variable of *poverty* to acquire significance as its p-value changed from 0.103 to 0.082. In Model 8 the variable of *territorial access* lost its significance (p-value changed from 0.073 to 0.108). However, the three measures of the *material capacity* variable involved were argued to be exogenous and hence such change is not relevant for assessing a potential endogeneity problem. The Wald test of exogeneity did not reject the null of exogenous fighting capacity in all the Models 6-8 (p-values of 0.689**, 0.921**, and 0.521**).

Table 12. Probit[584] Regressions with and without Instrumental Variable (IV) of *Arms Procurement* (Material Capacity Measured with Cumulative Index)

		1	1 with IV	5.2	5.2 with IV
Mobilization Capacity				2.005*	2.298*
				(1.17)	(1.27)
Fighting Capacity		0.964***	1.240***	1.673***	1.704**
		(1.23)	(0.41)	(0.61)	(0.72)
Material Capacity	**(Index)**	-0.015	-0.084	-0.165	-0.203
		(0.24)	(0.25)	(0.43)	(0.45)
Ethnic Persecution		0.933**	1.093**	0.167	0.169
		(1.39)	(0.44)	(0.69)	(0.70)
Territorial Access		0.968***	0.890***	2.024***	1.984**
		(0.33)	(0.34)	(0.72)	(0.79)
Interactions:					
Mobilization*Fighting				-1.168	-1.102
				(0.85)	(1.01)
Mobilization*Ethnic				1.333	1.703
				(0.99)	(1.13)
Mobilization*Material	(Index)			-0.042	0.028
				(0.54)	(0.57)
Mobilization*Territory				-1.632**	-1.909**
				(0.79)	(0.87)
Controls:					
Poverty (log)		-0.430	-0.386	-0.464	-0.531
		(0.28)	(0.29)	(0.31)	(0.35)
End Before 1997		-1.205***	-1.214***	-0.988**	-1.041**
		(0.40)	(0.41)	(0.47)	(0.51)
Cons		1.849	1.627	1.046	1.612
		(1.98)	(2.05)	(2.37)	(2.64)
N		83	77	80	76
Pseudo R^2		0.35		0.43	
Wald test of exogeneity (p-value)			0.234***		0.971**

Note: Standard errors are reported in parentheses. * significant at 10%; ** significant at 5%; *** significant at 1%.

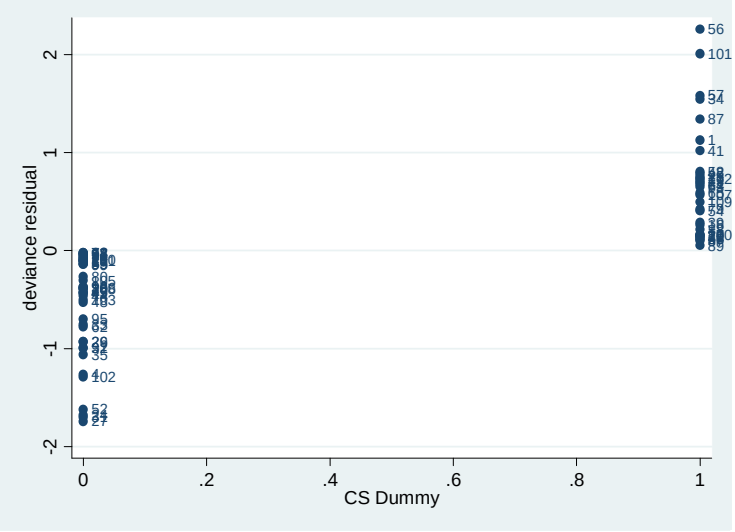
[584] The STATA command *ivprobit* was used in running the instrumental variable regression and the results were compared to the regular regression obtained by using the *probit* command. The reason for using *probit* instead of *logit* is that STATA does not implement instrumental variable technique for logistic regression which would be complicated since the maximum-likelihood estimation there cannot rely on simplifications obtained by using multivariate normality of residuals as in the *probit* case. Since *logit* and *probit* coefficients are equivalent up to a multiplicative constant, the conclusions regarding endogeneity are the same in both cases (STATA online forum).

Section 4. Explaining Outliers

Although the data evidence described in this chapter provides overall support to my hypotheses, there are nevertheless several armed groups in my sample who either recruited or did not recruit children while their organizational or contextual characteristics suggested otherwise. Such armed groups do not conform to the general pattern of my theoretical framework and can be thus called outliers. A closer examination of these cases is important for theory testing and theory building on the causes of child soldiering. There is a number of potential reasons that could have influenced the lack of fit: miscoding, estimates of child soldier recruitment instances may not accurately reflect the reality or insurgent groups might have had values on the independent variables which were hard to observe and hence code precisely. It is also possible that the mechanisms I have described as generating child recruitment practice by rebels are present in these conflicts and among the groups but are spurred by another factor (independent variable). In this way, anomalies can open up new questions for exploration.

The degree to which the lack of fit occurs can be detected in Figure 1 which shows the deviance residual for different insurgencies in my dataset plotted against the *child soldiering* dummy variable. The deviance residual measures the disagreement between the maxima of the observed and the fitted log likelihood functions.[585] The regression used for this analysis was run on a summary version of Models 6-8 in my analysis with two measures of *material capacity* variable included into its specification: diaspora support and natural resources. I examine the outliers from this model version because it accounts for the findings of my analysis which revealed significance of *the material capacity* variable when measured by diaspora support and natural resources, as opposed to the third state support or a cumulative index of all three measures of material capacity.

Figure 1. Outliers in Model Fit



Observations (armed groups in my sample) with deviance residuals smaller or larger than 2, corresponding approximately to the 2.5th and 97.5th quantiles of the Normal distribution, are usually considered as outliers.[586] This implies that the probability of their

[585] There is a preference in the literature for the use of deviance residuals over Pearson residuals because the former is closer to be Normally distributed than the latter (C. Cohen, C. Cohen, S. G. West, L. S. Aiken (2003) *Applied Multiple Regression / Correlation Analysis for the Behavioral Sciences*, Routledge Academic, p. 514).
[586] UCLA Academic Technology Services, Lesson 3, "Logistic Regression Diagnostics," URL: http://www.ats.ucla.edu/stat/stata/webbooks/logistic/chapter3/statalog3.htm

occurrence is considered unlikely to be caused by a statistical discrepancy.[587] Figure 1 reveals two outliers: TPLF armed group of Ethiopia (1976-91) with observation number 56, and the SPLM/SSIM faction of Sudan (1991-97) with observation label 101. In this section I attempt to shed light on the possible additional factors that could explain the anomalous behavior of these two armed groups with respect to child soldier recruitment beyond the factors captured in my explanatory framework above.

The TPLF in Ethiopia (1976-91)

The extreme observation 57 stands for the Ethiopian Tigrean People's Liberation Front (TPLF). The TPLF is coded in my dataset as a popular armed group, with low fighting capacity and no material support, operating in a conflict without ethnic persecution, and with territorial control and established presence in and outside of the country. According to my theoretical argument, the child soldier recruitment of a popular armed faction, such as the TPLF, should be predicted primarily by the factors of *ethnic persecution* variable, and less so by the variables of *fighting capacity* and *poverty*. The value of the *ethnic persecution* variable in my dataset suggests a low probability for child recruitment to occur. Low fighting capacity also suggests a low demand for fighters in general. However, the factor of *poverty* was exhibiting a higher level of deprivation than the average in my sample, thus revealing the possibility of enlistment of children from poorer families.[588] With two out of three explanatory variables suggesting a low recruitment of children, the observed value on the dependent variable of *child soldiering*, nevertheless, indicated the presence of children within the TPLF ranks.

How could the instances of child recruitment be explained for this group? I will start by examining more closely the influence of poverty. As I have mentioned in Chapter 4 on methodology, the measure of *poverty* in my large-*N* analysis, which utilizes the national values of the GDP, is rather crude. Unfortunately, this is the only available data on poverty recorded in the midst of armed struggle. Saying that, the weak prediction of poverty factor (albeit identified as an effect) in my statistical analysis could have been a result of such ecological fallacy problem, when poverty was measure at the national, as opposed to regional, local or even individual level. It is possible that if the latter type of measurement was used, the effect of poverty on child recruitment into popular insurgencies could have been much stronger than suggested in my large-*N* study. So, how did poverty matter, if at all, in the case of the TPLF recruitment of children?

While the national levels of poverty in Ethiopia suggested lower than average levels of material well-being in my sample, the regional distribution of poverty also indicated that the people of Tigray, the major area of mobilization for the TPLF, were also severely affected by deprivation relative to other

[587] Ibid.

[588] Measured by taking a logarithm of average national real GDP per capita in constant prices (chain series) in the midst of the conflict, this indicator of *poverty* for Ethiopia dataset scored 6.16, whereas the sample average was 6.92.

regions of the country.[589] To begin with, the Tigray region was identified among the only two (out of 20) rural sites in the four major regions of Ethiopia which were "suffering famine deaths in 1973," three years prior to the formation of the armed movement.[590] Moreover, the same study uncovered that Tigray, while being affected in 1973 by famine, "continued to be so for some time."[591] Thus, the *poverty* factor could have played a prominent role in mobilization of impoverished children into the ranks of the TPLF.

A closer look at the children profiles within the group could shed additional light on both poverty and some other potential factors affecting enlistment of minors. The review of my coding books for the TPLF faction demonstrates that child recruitment was recorded as positive primarily on the basis of sources which identified and explored the phenomenon of girl soldiers within this armed group. I could not identify a report which would specifically mention the recruitment of boy soldiers by the TPLF. Because in this study I adopted the definition of a child soldier that does not distinguish between gender, the presence of girl soldiers in the ranks of the TPFL resulted in the coding of the child recruitment variable with the value of 1. Thus, one study based on the interviews with a non-random sample of 11 demobilized TPFL's women fighters revealed that all of them were recruited while being under 18 years old:

> "The average age of recruitment of the 11 female participants in this study to the fighters was 12.68 years, while the youngest was five years old and the eldest was 17. Therefore, all entered as minors, and would officially be considered as 'child soldiers' at recruitment under official definitions used today."[592]

Meanwhile, what was probably happening in the case of the TPLF is that girl children who ended up with the forces were not a targeted group in the insurgency recruitment strategy. The presence of girls in this particular case is linked to yet a very special characteristic of the TPLF armed group which made it very attractive and popular for the Ethiopean women in the Tygrain region. Apparently, the TPLF ended up with many volunteering fighters, including girls and possibly boys, "through the establishment of social services, such as health and education."[593] Based on a socialist, Marxist-Leninist ideology, the movement "developed strong grassroots support throughout Tigray as a result of community development, an emphasis on collective action, liberation education and mobilisation of a strong Tigrean

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[589] TPLF was formed around 1975, in Eritrea's province of Tigray, as an opposition movement to the ruling Mengistu's Derg military dictatorship in Ethiopia (Angela Veale, "From Child Soldier to Ex-Fighter: Female Fighters, Demobilisation and Reintegration in Ethiopia," Institute of Strategic Studies, Monograph 85, April 2003, p. 15).

[590] The following study reported these findings: Alula Pankhurst and Philippa Bevan, "Hunger, Poverty and 'Famine' in Ethiopia: Some Evidence from Twenty Rural Sites in Amhara, Tigray, Oromiya and SNNP Regions," URL: http://www.eldis.org/vfile/upload/1/document/0708/DOC16584.pdf , p. 7.

[591] Ibid., p. 8.

[592] Angela Veale, "From Child Soldier to Ex-Fighter: Female Fighters, Demobilisation and Reintegration in Ethiopia," Institute of Strategic Studies, Monograph 85, April 2003, p. 26

[593] Angela McIntyre, "Rights, Root Causes and Recruitment: the Youth Factor in Africa's Armed Conflicts," *African Security Review*, Vol 12, No 2, 2003, URL: http://www.operationspaix.net/IMG/pdf/African_Security_Review_children_in_conflicts_2003_.pdf

identity."[594] In the areas under its control, the movement established a counter-government "that sought to address gender equality through legal reforms in the areas of marriage, divorce, education and land reform."[595] As to the girls, some of them were reported "to join the movement as a way of escaping early marriages."[596] On the basis of 1993 demobilization statistics, the TPLF and the EPLF (Eritrean People's Liberation Front) armed groups were reported to be cumulatively composed of approximately a third of female fighters.[597] The group's provision of social services was probably the primary reason for why, according to one study, 65% of women wanted to stay in the army after the end of hostilities.[598]

Because in my coding I did not restrict the recruitment of children to boys only, and, in fact, extrapolated the presence of boys in the group from the enlistment of girls, it is possible that the value of my dependent variable of *child recruitment* is somewhat overstated. In other words, the value of '1' can be said to be too high for the actual child soldier recruitment situation exhibited by the TPLF. On the other hand, the variable could not be coded as '0' in the presence of girl soldiers in the insurgency's ranks. In a sense, the TPLF did not pursue a direct child recruitment strategy, but ended up having girl soldiers as a result of particular inadequate state social policies towards equality of women. The case of the TPLF thus indicates a need to develop a more nuanced coding of the dependent variable to account for the cases when armed groups end up with having children without any specifically developed recruitment programs. Unfortunately, such detailed coding falls outside the scope of this project, but will be developed in my future research.

Overall, the exploration of the TPLF outlier case suggests that the group's behavior does fit my general theory. When examined separately, this case emphasizes the point that the *ethnic persecution* variable and, more specifically, defense motives, might not be the only push factors that drive some children into popular armed groups. As the TPLF example demonstrates, poverty in combination with other factors can play a significant role. There might be a constellation of extreme impoverishment (such as deadly famine), misguided state policies (such as severe inequality among Tygrain women in the north of the country condoned or instigated by the existing government) and the ability of an armed group to address such social problems. In a sense, the popularity of an armed group itself can result from the situations described above. It is the strong commitment of the TPLF to women's issues and credibility that could have made the group popular in the first place. As such, therefore, we should expect a certain number of children (albeit I suspect a minority) to join popular insurgencies even in the case of low

[594] Angela Veale, "From Child Soldier to Ex-Fighter: Female Fighters, Demobilisation and Reintegration in Ethiopia," Institute of Strategic Studies, Monograph 85, April 2003, p. 15.
[595] Angela McIntyre, "Rights, Root Causes and Recruitment," p. 5.
[596] Ibid., p. 5.
[597] Angela Veale, "From Child Soldier to Ex-Fighter," p. 16.
[598] E. M. Bruchhaus and A. Mehreteab, "Leaving the Warm House: the Impact of Demobilisation in Eritrea," in K. Kingma (ed.), *Demobilisation in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Macmillan Press, London, 2000).

demand for combatants. Again, disintegration of the dependent variable of child soldiering into 'minor', 'medium', and 'significant', or a similar more nuanced scale than the current binary indicator variable, can be helpful in testing the robustness of my findings.

The SSIM/SSIA Faction of Sudan (1991-97)

The outlier observation 101 represents the South Sudan Independence Movement/Army (SSIM/SSIA). The SSIM/SSIA is coded in my dataset as unpopular, with low fighting capacity, no ethnic cleansing, with contraband support, and with some territorial control (1 out of 2). According to my theoretical argument, the child soldier recruitment of such an unpopular faction should be predicted by the variables of *fighting capacity*, *material capacity*, as well as *territorial control*. The low value of *fighting capacity* variable suggests low demand for additional recruits, including children. At the same time, the presence of a contraband resource, such as oil, on the SSIM/SSIA territory of operation could have generated the appeal within the group leadership to recruit minors, as I argued in this work. Therefore, the demand for children generated through the mechanism of contraband resources, as opposed to fighting capacity, could have explained the occurrence of children in the ranks of the SSIM/SSIA. Furthermore, the control over large swaths of territories by the faction could have facilitated access to children.

These circumstances suggest that the SSIM/SSIA case does not directly contradict my theoretical explanation. There are two out of three explanatory variables from my argument which predict the outcome of child soldiering correctly, and only one variable of *fighting capacity* which does not. Therefore, it is the relative importance of these three factors that might not reflect the characteristics of this case accurately when estimated from the full sample. Specifically, the role of fighting capacity appears to be stronger than in other cases. Therefore, the case of SSIM/SSIA is fitted as an outlier due to an atypical value of just one out three independent variables. Thus, the demand for additional soldiers from fighting capacity leads to child recruitment more intensively than the one generated by access to resources. In other words, access to resources may determine only the quality of recruits, children or adults, as opposed to their quantity. If there is no demand for soldiers altogether, there will be no children in the ranks of organization even with the access to natural resources.

There might be another potential explanation of the non-conforming behavior of the SSIM/SSIA. This explanation relates to the fact that SSIM/SSIA faction was a splinter group, as opposed to being independently formed, of another prominent armed movement from the Southern Sudan. The SSIM/SSIA leader, Riek Machar, was a former member of the SPLM (1985-2005) insurgency led by John Garang.[599] "Following an unsuccessful coup attempt in 1991 where he attempted to wrest control of the SPLM from

[599] IRIN, "Sudan: A Future without War?" Humanitarian News and Analysis, A project of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, available at: http://www.irinnews.org/InDepthMain.aspx?InDepthId=22&ReportId=64284

John Garang, Machar broke away from the SPLM to form the South Sudanese Independence Movement (SSIM) from 1991 to 1997..."[600] As a splinter group of the SPLM, the SSIM/SSIA ranks could have more or less resembled the structure of the former, as Riek Machar took his loyal fighters with him. Meanwhile, the SPLM faction is recorded in my dataset as one that recruited child soldiers.

The CSNPD of Chad (1992-94)

The observation with the identification number 27 in Figure 1 may not strictly speaking be considered an outlier since its deviance residual is less than 2 in absolute value, but it is closest to this benchmark among the observations with negative deviance residuals. As such, it deserves closer scrutiny. This observation is the National Revival Committee for Peace and Democracy (CSNPD) of Chad. The CSNPD is coded as unpopular in my dataset, with high fighting capacity and material support from contraband, operating in a conflict without ethnic persecution, and with territorial control and presence in and outside of the country. According to my theoretical argument, the child soldier recruitment of such unpopular armed movement should be predicted primarily by the *fighting* and *material capacity*, as well as the *territorial control* variables. The values of these three factors in my dataset suggest a very high probability for child recruitment to occur. Nevertheless, I could not find any reports on recruitment of minors by the CSNPD.

It is my suspicion that due to the CSNDP's exceptionally short existence (3 years below the average 7 year duration of armed incompatibilities in my sample) the group received unusually low coverage and attention from the media and humanitarian agencies. Therefore, my coding of the absence of child soldiering might simply reflect the gap in our information about this particular armed faction. While the short life span of the CSNDP could affect data collection in this particular case, duration of conflict in general does not seem to affect my data sample. Thus, armed groups in existence for three or fewer years in my dataset had almost the same probability of having children in their ranks (mean of 0.42) as armed groups operating for longer times (mean of 0.46).

This lack of information in general on the CSNPD might also be explained by the fact that this armed group represents just one of the many armed rebel forces (including the Movement for Democracy and Development (MDD), Chadian national Front (FNT) and the Western Armed Forces, (FAO)) with whom the Chadian government clashed in early 1990s near Lake Chad and in southern regions of the country.[601] The CSNPD could have been lost to the media and observers attention as one of plenty militarized political actors in Chad. Consider, for example, that during the peaceful discussions about creation of a pluralist democratic regime at that time, over 750 political actors, including representatives from the

[600] "Sudan, Oil, and Human Rights," URL: http://everything2.com/title/Sudan%252C+Oil%252C+and+Human+Rights
[601] International Criminology Project, "Chad," URL: http://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/faculty/rwinslow/africa/chad.html

CSNPD and other armed opposition groups, participated in the talks.[602] This extreme fragmentation of political actors in Chad could have explained the non-existence of reports on child soldiering as a poor data collection on the armed group.

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Overall, the examination of the three outliers demonstrated several major points. First, it suggested that specific manifestations of poverty, or rather impoverishment, in the TPLF case taking the form of severe gender inequalities in Ethiopia in late 1970s, could potentially explain the occurrence of child soldiers, especially girl soldiers. Second, analysis of the SSIM/SSIA armed faction in Sudan, on the one hand, confirmed the relative importance of the factors in my model. Thus, recording of the SSIM/SSIA faction as an outlier despite the fact that two out of three independent variables predicted the outcome correctly suggests the role of *fighting capacity* in my model appears to be stronger than that of *material capacity* and *territorial control*. On the other hand, the inability of my theory in explaining this case could have been attributed to the fact that the SSIM/SSIA was a splinter faction of the SPLM armed group, which recruited child soldiers with this particular outcome predicted well by my theory. Therefore, while the characteristics of the SSIM/SSIA became different form the SPLM, the initial presence of children in the ranks of the dissenting units was technically predicted by the characteristics of the SSIM/SSIA's predecessor. The examination of the third outlier, the CSNPD of Chad, pointed at the likelihood of inadequate data collection on that armed group, which was both short-lived and blended among many other military actors in the country at the same time, leading to a poor coverage of this group by the media and observers.

Therefore, the occurrence of these outliers in my statistical analysis does not suggest any serious flaws in my theory. My examination of the three non-conforming cases, however, reveals several useful insights for my theoretical framework and compilation of the dataset. First, it suggested that the variable of poverty and its operationalization can be adjusted to include the measure of gender inequality. Second, I might alter the emphasis of the *fighting capacity* variable in my argument as the strongest predictor of child soldiering. Third, with respect to the dataset, the outliers suggested the importance of identifying the cases such as the SSIM/SSIA which can be splinter groups, as opposed to the independent factions, with different group characteristics than their predecessors but inheriting child soldiers which were recruited by the original faction. Also, as the case of the CSNPD revealed, the dataset should be screened for the presence of similar armed groups with short duration and multiple military competitors, for which the seeming non-existence of child soldiers could have been simply attributed to a lack of information for such type of factions.

[602] Ibid.

Summary

The empirical results from the conducted large-*N* analysis support my argument, fully confirming Hypotheses 1, 3, and 4. Armed groups were found to be more likely to recruit children if rebels operated in conflicts with intense battles (possess high fighting capacity in my operationalization) (Hypothesis 1). This relationship was found to be stronger for unpopular rebels (Hypothesis 1.1). Results also showed that armed groups engaged more intensively in child recruitment practice if they operated in conflicts characterized by extremely insecure conditions (situations of ethnic persecution in my operationalization) (Hypothesis 3), with this effect being larger for popular insurgencies (Hypothesis 3.1). The large-*N* analysis findings also corroborate my proposition that armed groups with access to larger territories are more likely to recruit children (Hypothesis 4), especially if rebels' popularity is low (Hypothesis 4.1).

In my explanatory framework, I suggested that armed groups offering material rewards to their members were less likely to have children in their ranks (Hypothesis 2), especially for unpopular belligerents (Hypothesis 2.1). This conjecture was only partially supported by the data. Only the increase in diaspora support as one of the three potential funding sources of rebel organizations was found to reduce the probability of child recruitment, and only for unpopular armed groups, as predicted. When measured by the cumulative index of all three types of material support that unpopular rebels might receive, or by the index of third state support alone, the factor of *material capacity* proved to be a weak predictor of *child soldiering*. If measured as access to natural resources, however, the *material capacity* showed the reverse relationship with the dependent variable, compared to what I hypothesized.

As anticipated, the effects of my control variables of *conflict duration* and *conflict intensity* on child soldiering were found to be insignificant. *Poverty* was estimated as significant only in a small number of model specifications, with relatively weak predictive power, as expected. The effect of *conflict timing* turned out largely significant but smaller than for all other variables in my model. The results also suggested that *conflict timing* could be more important in the case of unpopular armed groups.

In sum, the empirical tests of my hypotheses revealed that three factors from my argument had the strongest effect on the probability of armed groups to recruit child soldiers: groups' *fighting capacity*, *ethnic persecution* in the country, and groups' *territorial access*. Although insurgents' *material capacity* was also found to affect child recruitment, it did so to a lesser extent and only when measured in diaspora support. Moreover, the findings also demonstrated that all of these factors had different effect magnitude and presence for popular and unpopular armed movements, confirming the behavioral patterns proposed in my extended argument. More specifically, while *fighting capacity, territorial access* and *material capacity* measured in diaspora support mattered only for unpopular groups, *ethnic persecution* affected child soldier recruitment in the case of popular insurgencies, as predicted.

Chapter 6: Case Study I

In this chapter I conduct a cross-group comparative case study of five armed groups from the First Liberian Civil War of 1989-96. In Section 1, I offer a brief description of the Liberian conflict and introduce its major militarized actors. In Section 2, using the data from my interviews with former child soldiers, I establish the difference in child soldier recruitment rates by the five Liberian factions. Then, in Section 3, I assess the values of the four explanatory factors proposed in my argument to affect the levels of child recruitment practice. I conclude with juxtaposing the predicted values of my dependent variable, based on the values of independent variables, with the actual values of child recruitment practices of the five Liberian armed groups, and comment on the strength of my argument.

Section 1. Liberian Conflict and its Five Non-State Actors

The first Liberian conflict started with the incursion of one of the armed factions, the ***NPFL*** (National Patriotic Front of Liberia), into the country from Ivory Coast in December 1989.[603] The goal of the group was to overthrow the ruling regime of President Doe. With about 200 international revolutionary fighters under the command of Charles Taylor, the insurgents attacked the government forces in the Nimba County, where rebels established their first military base and obtained support from people of the oppressed tribes. The NPFL forces managed to push the government troops all the way to the capital city of Monrovia while at the same time capturing most of the Liberian territory. The first battle for the capital in the summer of 1990 was unsuccessful for the NPFL, as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) intervened by dispatching the peacekeeping force of Ecomog (ECOWAS Monitoring Group) to Liberia, preventing Charles Taylor from capturing Monrovia. From that time on until 1996 the conflict took the form of intermittent but severe armed struggle. Interrupted only temporarily by over 16 signed but short-lasting peace agreements, the fighting went on between the NPFL and the government forces supported by Ecomog as well as among other factions which soared in numbers during the war.[604]

Another Liberian faction, the ***INPFL*** (Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia), was formed by Prince Johnson, who had initially been a member of Taylor's forces but broke away from the NPFL in

[603] This description of the Liberian First Civil War is based on numerous sources. For more information on the conflict and its military actors mentioned in this section refer to the following sources, among others: Duyvesteyn, *Clausewitz and African War*, Chapter 2, "Case Study I: Liberia, 1989-97," pp. 20-36; George Klay Kieh, *The First Liberian Civil War: The Crises of Underdevelopment*, Society and Politics in Africa, Vol. 17 (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2008), pp. 154-156; and "Liberia – First Civil War – 1989-1996," *Global Security Database*, URL: http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/liberia-1989.htm. For more detailed accounts of the armed struggle in Liberia in 1989-96 see also Adekeye Adebajo, *Liberia's Civil War: Nigeria, ECOMOG, and Regional Security in West Africa* (The Project of the International Peace Academy, 2002); Gabriel Williams, *Liberia: The Heart of Darkness, Accounts of Liberia's Civil War and Its Destabilizing Effects in West Africa* (Trafford Publishing, 2002); Huband, *The Liberian Civil War*; Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*.

[604] For the details on peace accords during the first Liberian conflict see Kieh, *The First Liberian Civil War*, p. 156.

1990 by taking "the best-trained" fighters with him.[605] Johnson's forces marched to Monrovia in early 1990 before Taylor's troops in an attempt to oust the Doe regime. After its offensive against the AFL troops in Monrovia was unsuccessful, the INPFL cooperated with Ecomog in its new pursuit of prohibiting Taylor from taking over the capital. Johnson's troops were estimated at about 4,000 combatants.[606] After capturing and killing President Doe on September 9, 1990, the INPFL forces remained largely inactive: they were contained to their Caldwell base in Monrovia on the orders and supervision of Ecomog until the INPFL's complete dissolution in October 1992.[607]

In October 1990, the third faction started forming in Sierra Leonean refugee camps where former Krahn and Mandingo politicians and soldiers were recruiting among their tribesmen.[608] This armed group was called ***Ulimo*** (United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy). As reflected in its name, the stated goal of Ulimo was "the liberation of Liberian territory from Taylor's hold."[609] In this effort it was supported by Sierra Leone and Guinea.[610] In late 1991 the group started incursions from north-west and south-west into Liberia and by August 1992 this military offensive "escalated into serious inter-factional armed conflict."[611] It was the Ulimo insurgency with its several thousand men that in 1992 helped Ecomog "stop the takeover of Monrovia" by the NPFL.[612] In March 1994, Ulimo split into two sub-factions: Ulimo-K and Ulimo-J. The fighting was now continuing between the rival Ulimo-s, as well as between them and the NPFL.

The ***Ulimo-K*** faction was headed by Alhaji Kromah and consisted mainly of Mandingo people of Guinean Malinke origin. By late 1996, the group had about 9,000 fighters.[613] Ulimo-K was regarded as a

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[605] Duyvesteyn, *Clausewitz and African War*, p. 26; "Liberia – First Civil War – 1989-1996," *Global Security Database*. Officially, Johnson declared the independence of his faction in the address to the international media in July 1990 (Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 84). However, unofficially the armed group was acting independently of Taylor since February 1990, when it marched to Monrovia unilaterally, apparently without Taylor's order.

[606] The figure of 4,000 stands for the average between the minimum of 2,200 and maximum of 6,000 fighters cited in the literature for the INPFL strength. The minimum of 2,200 combatants is in itself the average of the 400-4,000 range offered in the PRIO/Uppsala Armed Conflict Dataset: Gleditsch, et. al., "Armed Conflict 1946–2001." The maximum benchmark of 6,000 soldiers comes from the estimates of the Liberian combatants broken by factions and cited in Paul Collier, "Demobilization and Insecurity: A Study in the Economic of Transition from War to Peace," *Journal of International Development*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (1994), p. 348.

[607] Kieh, *The First Liberian Civil War*, p. 147; "Liberia – First Civil War – 1989-1996," *Global Security Database*.

[608] Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 89.

[609] Duyvesteyn, *Clausewitz and African War*, p. 26, citing Dirk van den Boom, *Bürgerkrieg in Liberia: Chronologie – Protagonisten – Prognose*, Studien zur Politicwissenschaft, Band 80 (Münster: Lit Verlaf, 1993), p. 48.

[610] Ibid., p. 26.

[611] "Liberia" in *Africa South of the Sahara 2004, Regional Surveys of the World* (Taylor and Francis Group, Europa Publications, 2004, 33rd edition), p. 603.

[612] "Liberia – First Civil War – 1989-1996," *Global Security Database*. For the size of the group refer to Duyvesteyn, *Clausewitz and African War*, p. 26.

[613] This figure stands for the average of the following estimates which I found in the literature. The lower range of 5,000-6,000 was offered in Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 134; a somewhat higher estimate of 6,800 was suggested in Harris, "From 'Warlord' to 'Democratic' President," p. 449; and yet the maximum of 12,000 soldiers was said to reflect the situation in Liberia by Collier, "Demobilization and Insecurity," p. 348.

"second-rate" player in the Liberian war compared to the NPFL, but at the same time the armed group managed to challenge Taylor's forces and their territorial control in the north-east of the country.[614] The ***Ulimo-J*** faction consisted of mainly Krahn members under the leadership of Roosevelt Johnson.[615] With about 6,000 fighters in its ranks, it took hold of some Liberian territories in the north-western part of the country.[616] During its existence, Ulimo-J engaged in armed struggle for state power with the NPFL, and for its immediate commercial interests in diamond mining against the rival faction of Ulimo-K as well as the Ecomog forces.

The ***LPC*** group formed in 1991 but launched as an "armed faction," and allegedly as a proxy for the AFL, only in May 1993, as it was drawing its support from "veterans of Doe's old Special Anti-Terrorist Unit."[617] Estimated to have about 3,500 combatants, the LPC "made substantial gains from the NPFL in south eastern Liberia, vying for control of commercial operations in timber and rubber."[618] The three factions – Ulimo-K, Ulimo-J, and the LPC – albeit acting on their own, were by 1994 challenging the exclusive control over Liberia by the NPFL forces.

In August 1996, after the last and most intense fighting in the capital between all the factions and government forces supported by Ecomog, the final cease-fire was brokered between the warring factions.[619] The NPFL turned out the strongest and the longest-lived faction in this Liberian conflict and came out of the war victorious when Charles Taylor won the 1997 elections and became the president of Liberia – a goal that he had been trying to achieve by military and diplomatic means from 1989.

The war had devastating consequences for the country and was branded as "a descent into hell."[620] The conservative estimate of the death toll was set at about 150,000-200,000 of the total pre-war population of 2.5 million.[621] "An estimated 50,000 children were killed; many more were injured, orphaned, or abandoned," with approximately 100 "underfunded" orphanages operating in and around Monrovia after the war.[622] More than half of the country's population was displaced as refugees and

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[614] Harris, "From 'Warlord' to 'Democratic' President," p. 453.
[615] "Liberia – First Civil War – 1989-1996," *Global Security Database.*
[616] I found three different estimates for the group's strength in the literature. One source put the number at 3,800 (Harris, "From 'Warlord' to 'Democratic' President," p. 453, citing the figures form the DDR programs); another one specified the number of 7,776 (Gleditsch, et. al., "Armed Conflict 1946–2001"); and yet third study suggested the estimate at 8,000 combatants. Therefore, I cite here the middle range number of these three estimates.
[617] Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 100.
[618] "Liberia," *Conciliation Resources Database*, URL: http://www.c-r.org/our-work/accord/liberia/profiles.php. For the estimates of the LPC size refer to Harris, "From 'Warlord' to 'Democratic' President," p. 449, who sets the number at about 2,500, and Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 100, who suggests that figure to be 4,650, following Collier, "Demobilization and Insecurity," p. 348.
[619] "Liberia – First Civil War – 1989-1996," *Global Security Database*.
[620] Tom Kuhlman, "Responding to Protracted Refugee Situations: a Case Study of Liberian Refugees In Côte d'Ivoire," UNHCR Report, EPAU/2002/07, July 2002, p. 9.
[621] Ibid., p. 9.
[622] "Liberia – First Civil War – 1989-1996," *Global Security Database.*

IDPs, with the latter amassing in at least 38 camps in the country in 1997.[623] The entire country was in ruins after destruction and widespread looting. Consider the degree of devastation of the "already underdeveloped infrastructure": "the national hydro plant and water purification systems were destroyed"; "the electric poles were stripped of the copper wire and destroyed in some cases"; "bridges were blown up as part of some of the groups' fighting tactics"; public and private buildings, including health facilities, were shattered; the roads became even "more impassable."[624] The economic sector of the country was barely existent: "all economic production in various sectors… ceased"; cultivation of different crops dropped by a proportion ranging from 50% to 80%; and "there was massive capital flight."[625] It was no surprise that peace in Liberia, so devastated economically and socially, was short-lived before the second war sparked in 1999.

Section 2. Dependent Variable: Child Recruitment Practices of Five Liberian Factions

All the parties to the Liberian First Civil War (1989-96) recruited children and the overall scope of child soldiering in that armed struggle was substantial. Many reporters and monitoring organizations were amazed to see vast numbers of children among rebels. Accounts similar to the following from Amnesty International abide in the practitioner literature:

> "All parties to the Liberian conflict have abducted children, both girls and boys and some as young as seven years, and forced them to fight, carry ammunition, prepare food or carry out other tasks. Girls have been raped and forced to provide sexual services. Older girls have been actively engaged in fighting, while younger ones have provided domestic services as cooks or cleaners or carried arms and ammunition. Many child soldiers have been given drugs and alcohol to induce aggression and inhibit fear. With little or no military training, they have been sent directly to the front line where many have been killed or wounded. Those resisting recruitment or refusing to comply with their commanders' orders risked being beaten or killed."[626]

Agencies found it difficult to claim any specific number of child soldiers in the first Liberian war.[627] However, there were many estimates, offered by different sources and in different contexts, which cumulatively exhibit a somewhat similar trend. The number of children under 18 years old involved in the first Liberian war, was roughly estimated at 15,000-20,000.[628] That constitutes about 30% to 40% of all

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[623] Ibid.
[624] Kieh, *The First Liberian Civil War*, pp. 158-59.
[625] Ibid., p. 158.
[626] Amnesty International, "The Promises of Peace for 21,000 Child Soldiers." Analogous descriptions can be found in reports issued by the UNICEF, HRW or their overarching CSUCS organization.
[627] During the conflict in 1994 the Human Rights Watch reported: "No one knows the exact number of children who have been used in the civil war in Liberia; even the total number of fighters used by all factions is unknown" (HRW, *Easy Prey*, pp. 2-3). After a brief demobilization program in 1994 and a comprehensive one in 1996-1997, more estimates on child and adult combatants surfaced. However, these numbers should be interpreted with caution as demobilization programs do not necessarily reflect recruitment trends. For an example of such discrepancy see the discussion of the Liberian DDR program in footnote 583.
[628] The number of 15,000 stands specifically for children under 18 years old and was cited by the Human Rights Watch, *How to Fight, How to Kill: Child Soldiers in Liberia*, HRW Report, February 2004, Vol. 16, No. 2 (A), p. 1.

47,000 combatants as of 1997.[629] This child soldier rate, calculated after examining absolute numbers of child and adult combatants, appears to be slightly higher than the estimates in the range of 18% and 30% offered by different agencies.[630] Thus, the reported percentages vary from 18% to 40%. The overall estimate of participating minors represented 3% of the Liberian pre-war child population, according to one source.[631] The DDR statistics suggest that 60% of former child soldiers who went through demobilization were active combatants. Two percent of these were reported to be female.[632] Most child soldiers "spent an average of four or more years with a warring faction."[633] Child soldier experiences can be reconstructed from the following DDR data distribution: "some 51% shot an average of ten people, 11% engaged in rape, 17% inflicted torture and 3.2% practiced cannibalism."[634]

While the scope of Liberian child soldiering, reflected in the above numbers, percentages, and accounts is indeed striking, taken at the country level it obscures the variation in the recruitment of minors across armed groups. Meanwhile, military factions in the First Liberian Civil War differed considerably in

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The figure of 20,000 also appears in some reports: "Over 20,000 child combatants were involved in the 1989–97 Liberian civil war…" (Olawale Ismail, "Liberia's Child Combatants: Paying the Price of Neglect," *Conflict, Security & Development*, Vol. 2, Issue 2, 2002, p. 125.

[629] The figure of 47,000 combatants represents the average of low (33,000) and high (60,000) estimates for the numbers of Liberian fighters which different sources identified for the country's first civil war. The lowest estimate of 33,000 combatants was offered by the UN as a result of its Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) in 1996 (UN, *Twenty-second Progressive Report of the Secretary-General of the UN Observer Mission in Liberia*, S/1997/237, 19 March 1997, URL: http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/co_mission/unomilFT.htm). Human Rights Watch cited the range of 40,000-60,000 combatants and noted that its higher bound of 60,000 was cited in the UN Consolidated Interagency Appeal in November 1993 and was considered by other observes to be too high to reflect the reality (HRW, *Easy Prey*, p. 2.). Similar figure of 60,000 was reported in Mats Berdal, *Disarmament and Demobilization after Civil War*, Adelphi Paper No. 303 (London: IISS and Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 43. The total number of fighters demobilized in Liberia between November 22, 1996 and February 9, 1997 was reported to be between 20,332 and 21,315 (UN, *Twenty-second Progressive Report of the Secretary-General of the UN Observer Mission in Liberia*).

[630] Observers, who were witnessing the Liberian conflict's development, and organizations, estimating the dire situation of the armed struggle in the country in 1994, tend to report higher percentages of children in armed groups. Thus, a 30% figure appears in the Human Rights Watch's report of 1994 on the participation of children in the Liberian conflict. In this document, the HRW refers to the estimates of another organization: "UNICEF estimates that 6,000 of the fighters, or 10 percent, are children under fifteen. In general, most observers agree that all the factions are made up largely of very young people; some estimate that another 20 percent of the fighters are between the ages of fifteen and seventeen" (HRW, *Easy Prey*, pp. 2-3).

The lower bound of 18% in the cited child soldiers range reflects the estimates offered after the UN demobilization programs in Liberia conducted in 1997. For example, one source found that "according to UN figures, by 9 February 1997, 24,500 of fighters had been disarmed and demobilized. These included 4,306 child fighters [*or 18% - the author's comment*] and 250 adult female fighters" (UN, *Twenty-second Progressive Report of the Secretary-General of the UNOMIL*).

[631] Ismail, "Liberia's Child Combatants, p. 125.

[632] David Kelly, *The Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration of Child Soldiers in Liberia, 1994–1997: The Process and Lessons Learned* (New York: UNICEF, 1998), cited in Ismail, "Liberia's Child Combatants," p. 125.

[633] Ibid., p. 125.

[634] Ibid., p. 125.

their practice of child recruitment, as my field research demonstrated.[635] Table 13 below summarizes my estimates of percentages of child soldiers relative to adults in five Liberian armed factions.

Table 13. Child Soldiers in Armed Groups of the First Liberian Civil War (1989-1996)

Armed Faction	*Ratio of Children to Adults in Units*	*Ratio of Children to Adults in Battalions*	*Ratio of Children to Adults in Brigades*	*Child Recruitment*
NPFL	60-100%	60%	{50%}	HIGH
LPC	66-90%		50%	HIGH
Ulimo-K	50%-66%		{40%}	MEDIUM HIGH
Ulimo-J	50%		30%	MEDIUM LOW
INPFL	<50%	"generally older men"	{<30%}	LOW

Note: The percentages in brackets are the extrapolated ratios.[636]

These ranges were calculated on the basis of the data from my own interviews with former Liberian child soldiers. More specifically, my informants were asked to comment on the relative numbers of child soldiers and adult combatants in the military division they served in. For those informants who were not good with numbers I gave an option to draw the shares of children and adults on pie charts or bars. Therefore, the percentages used in this section were derived from the absolute numbers provided or reflected in the visual representation of informants' drawings.[637]

I also checked for potential discrepancies in these figures against a number of secondary sources to the best of my effort, as this information is extremely hard to find – indeed virtually non-existent in the literature. While almost no study mentioned any numeric data on the scope of child recruitment for five Liberian armed groups examined here, some provided relevant information which could be used in combination with my data, obtained during the interviews, to construct a more or less reliable albeit approximate child to adult ratios. The outcome should be viewed as a valuable contribution to the knowledge about different armed groups in Liberian conflict and their child recruitment practices.

The percentage of child soldiers in certain units, where my informants served as combatants, may not reflect the percentage in an armed group as a whole. For example, the NPFL's infamous Small Boys Unit (SBU) consisted of almost 100% of children. It was stationed on the group's base in Gbarnga, where children recruited elsewhere were often delivered for training and redistribution. Since the SBU was

[635] According to my knowledge, there is no existing study that identified different child recruitment practices across Liberian armed groups participating in the country's first civil war.
[636] For description on how they were determined refer to the material of this chapter below.
[637] As expected, I found upon several experiments that my informants were dealing better with numbers and drawings than offering percentages. Therefore, in the majority of cases I did not attempt to ask largely uneducated Liberian youth to suggest the percentages of children relative to adults.

designed specifically for underage combatants, it is possible that former child soldiers who commented on the numbers of children in their units were referring to smaller divisions of the SBU. Therefore, this information may not be representative of the average rate of child recruitment for the NPFL group overall. To address this issue, in my assessment of child soldier ratios I account for the organizational structure of the Liberian armed groups and analyze the data systematically across three different division levels of armed forces: units, battalions, and brigades.

All five Liberian factions in my analysis resembled the military hierarchy of the NPFL, which, in turn, adopted its organizational system from the U.S. Army.[638] The whole group was subdivided into four brigades, each consisting of four battalions. The battalions were, in turn, composed of 'units'.[639] The SBU forces, mentioned above, constituted four infantry battalions of the NPFL, each assigned to one of the group's four brigades. [640] Besides one SBU battalion, each brigade included artillery, marine, and special security forces battalions. My interviewees commented on the distribution of children and adults at various levels of the groups' structure: some of them attested to their units' composition, while others had knowledge of battalions' or even brigades' age distribution.

With units aggregating to battalions and these in turn adding up to brigades, the actual scope of child recruitment in a group would most closely approximate the ratio of children to adults at the level of brigades. This is because my data covered only some units of each of the five Liberian groups. Meanwhile, besides the units for which the data was provided, the groups had many other units which most likely had lower child to adult ratios, as they were not represented in my survey data. Thus, as the NPFL example demonstrates, the SBU battalions were the only ones made primarily of children, with other three battalions (artillery, marine, and special security forces) also having children but to a smaller degree, according to my survey.

Therefore, reconstructing the data on groups' child to adults ratios on the basis of my data, I would expect a decreasing percentages with aggregation at higher levels of the organizational hierarchy, with highest ratios in the lowest division (a unit), and the lowest at the level of 'brigades'. While data at the brigade level is indeed more indicative of the group's overall child recruitment practice, unfortunately, it was not available for all armed groups in my case study. This is where knowledge about the composition

[638] The following information is based on my interview with a former NPFL soldier who was serving in the statistical office of the NPFL (Ghana, winter 2008).
[639] In the U.S. Army the 'unit' level is represented by several divisions, such as platoons, squads, and companies. These were not a part of the NPFL's and other Liberian groups' structure, as none of my informants mentioned such break-down.
[640] The word 'Unit' in the SBU acronym is, technically, incorrect. The structure should be called 'Forces', out of which four NPFL's battalions were made. Sometimes in the literature the SBU is mentioned as the 'Small Boys Battalion', but often mistakenly so as the authors of reports refer to all children in the NPFL, rather than one fourth of all 'Small Boys Forces' in the group, for which the word 'battalion' should stand for. I clarified this confusion with the former NPFL soldier, mentioned above, who served in the statistical office of the NPFL.

of units and battalions, as opposed to brigades, becomes useful, as it allows comparison or systematic extrapolation of child soldier ratios across Liberian armed groups when contrasted on the same organizational level.

The information I obtained during my surveys, and in greater detail during the interviews with former Liberian child soldiers, confirmed that all other four armed factions besides the NPFL were also structured around units, battalions, and brigades. Moreover, similar to the NPFL, other Liberian factions had units designed specifically for child soldiers. For instance, the Special Forces of the INPFL were reported to recruit more children than any other of its units.[641] The LPC apparently had its own SBU, matching not only the NPFL's structure but even specific names of divisions. This similarity of military organization of different Liberian factions justifies comparison of their child soldier ratios across one another. In what follows I comment on child recruitment of each armed group involved in the First Liberian Civil War.

The ***NPFL*** armed group resorted to massive recruitment of children from the initial stage of its existence and engaged in the practice throughout the duration of armed struggle. The following account is just one example among many in the literature remarking on the group's child recruitment:

> "When Taylor attacked, and gained ground and support in Nimba in 1989 and 1990, he immediately developed a useful and innovative tactic that eventually came to symbolize the depravity of the war for many observers: the NPFL's Small Boys Unit. Taylor consciously recruited young boys to form special units of intensely loyal rebels, unburdened by the independence of thought or moral restraint of adulthood – a prepubescent Liberian rebel version of the cult of personality. The small boys, who uniformly refer to Taylor as "our father," participated in all aspects of rebel conduct, including serving in front line combat operations, atrocities against civilian populations, and even rape. UNOMIL's Chief Operating Officer told Africa Watch, "It's a children's war. Kids get promoted in rank for committing an atrocity; they can cut off someone's head without thinking."[642]

The number of child soldiers in the NPFL appears to be staggering.[643] Consider, for example, the following testimony of a man who lived in a suburb of Monrovia and whose house was attacked by the armed group in July 1990: "about 70 per cent of the rebels were all teenagers ranging from, say, twelve to seventeen years."[644] This witness account matches the information provided by the NPFL child participants whom I interviewed. The minimum ratio of children to adults mentioned by informants for

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[641] From my interview with an NPFL combatant in Ghana, winter 2008.

[642] Kenneth Cain, "The Rape of Dinah: Human Rights, Civil War in Liberia, and Evil Triumphant," *Human Rights Quarterly*, Vol. 21, Issue 2, 1999, pp. 265-307, at pp. 278-279, citing HRW, *Easy Prey*, and Stephen Ellis, "Liberia 1989-94: A Study of Ethnic and Spiritual Violence," *African Affairs*, Vol. 94, Issue 165, 1995.

[643] It is possible that due to the vast numbers of children in the NPFL ranks Charles Taylor's group and its child recruitment practices became so widely known around the world.

[644] Ellis, *Mask of Anarchy*, p. 113, citing Leonard Brehun, *Liberia: The War of Horror* (Adwinsa Publications: Accra, 1991), p. 45. It is possible that this witness has encountered a group from the Small Boys Unit, which by definition consisted primarily of underage fighters. However, as I show further, from my interviews with former Liberian child soldiers I concluded that this account might well represent the situation in any unit of the NPFL.

NPFL units – the lowest division in the group's structure – was 66% (or two thirds), and the maximum reached 100%.[645] Another ratio cited by my interviewees was 70%, and in their verbal assessments some informants mentioned "more children than adults" in their units. Ratios of children to adults for several NPFL battalions, except the SBU with 100%, were reported to be over 60%.

No NPFL informant was in a position to comment on the numbers of child soldiers in the brigades to which their divisions used to belong. However, since the SBU battalions were the primary and the only infantry divisions of the NPFL, it can be estimated that their forces were disproportionately overrepresented in each of the faction's four brigades, compared to other three battalions. Thus, the NPFL brigades, consisting of the SBU battalions with close to 100% child to adults ratio, and of three other battalions (artillery, marine, and special security forces), which also used children to a considerable degree according to my survey, could altogether make more than a half of all children in the ranks of the NPFL. The *child recruitment* variable for Taylor's faction is therefore assigned the value of 'high'.

It is noteworthy that demobilization programs conducted in Liberia in 1997 recorded only 18% of child soldiers in the NPFL. However, closer analysis of the Liberian conflict casts serious doubts on such a small percentage of children in the faction's ranks. For instance, Olawale Ismail stated that 18% was "the fewest number of child soldiers" demobilized under the Liberian DDR program in 1996-1997 despite the fact that the NPFL had "the largest number of child combatants in its ranks."[646] According to him, this is explained by the fact that most members of the NPFL "have been reassigned to internal and external security units" of the new government army of Charles Taylor in 1997 and thus did not go through the demobilization process.[647] Another reason to doubt that such a low demobilization rate could indicate the actual rates of the NPFL child soldiers is the fact that out of over 200 former Liberian child soldiers in my survey, only one person reported taking part in any DDR program. Indeed, the 1997 program was limited and far from representative to generate any reliable figures on distribution of combatants or child soldiers across armed groups.[648]

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[645] For the information on how the percentages were assigned by me on the basis of the data provided by informants refer back to pp. 144-145 of this chapter. Here the ratio 66%, for example, stands for the unit with 75 people in it, of which approximately 50 were reported by the informant to be under 18 and about 25 over 18 years old.

[646] Ismail, "Liberia's Child Combatants," http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~content=t713411970~db=all~tab=issueslist~branches=2-v2 p. 132.

[647] Ibid.,http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~content=t713411970~db=all~tab=issueslist~branches=2-v2 p. 132.

[648] Consider that the disarmament and demobilization program in Liberia lasted only three months as it was launched on November 22, 1996 and terminated on February 9, 1997 (UN, *Twenty-second Progressive Report of the Secretary-General of the UNOMIL*). Ilene Cohn offers a useful insight on how demobilization program in Liberia in 1996-97 missed a large proportion of youth: "Hundreds, perhaps thousands of youth did not participate in the demobilization, possibly detained by their commanders or even by communities that reportedly captured children (of other tribes) during the fighting and kept them as forced labour. As for those youth enticed to demobilize, many were excluded from protective services due to their age at the moment of demobilization. In fact there are thousands who entered the conflict as youth and spent their adolescence in the factions only to reach peace as adults, never

Another rampant recruiter of children was the ***LPC*** faction of George Boley. According to one (non-representative) survey of demobilized youth by the UN Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Office (UNHACO) in 1996, 37% of the demobilized combatants from the LPC were children.[649] My informants reported the range of 66% (or two thirds) for the units other than SBUs, where the rate was indeed higher and reached 90%. Yet another unit of the LPC called the 'Alligator Group', according to my informants, was made primarily for child soldiers and had between 75% and 86% of children relative to adults.[650] One informant reported on the composition of his LPC brigade as being split in half between children and adults.[651] With overwhelming number of children relative to adults in some LPC units, as well as up to 50% of minors reported for the group's highest military division – a 'brigade' – the insurgency's child recruitment practice can be assessed at a 'high' level, similar to the NPFL.

Recruitment of children by the ***Ulimo-K*** faction was milder than one by the NPFL or the LPC, but still a considerable one, as the following numerical representations demonstrate. My informants reported between 50% and 66% of children in some units with one former child soldier mentioning that there were "more children than adults" in his unit. The data for ratios of children to adults in battalions or brigades of Ulimo-K were, unfortunately, not available. However, one might extrapolate percentages smaller than the ones reported for the group's units. Note that if the NPFL and the LPC were said to have about 50% of children in their brigades, while amassing at least 80% of children at the 'unit' levels of divisions. Therefore, it might be conjectured that, since Ulimo-K had a reported unit range of about 60% of children, the ratio of minors to adults in the group's brigades (and therefore the faction as a whole) could be around 40%. Overall, the data point at a lesser but still prominent trend of child recruitment for the Ulimo-K group relative to the NPFL or the LPC. On the basis of the available information, I assigned for Ulimo-K the value of 'moderate high' on the dependent variable of *child recruitment*.

In its report on Liberian Human Rights Practices during 1995, the U.S. Department of State mentioned only three armed groups (namely, the NPFL, the LPC and Ulimo-K) as recruiters of child

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again to be "of concern" as child soldiers and yet having no childhood identity apart from war monger and war victim. The UNHACO statistics reflect the numerical extent of this group of young men (they could number as high as 10,000–15,000), but we may never know how they have been affected and how they are managing to readapt to civilian life. Others were under eighteen but failed to identify themselves as in need of family tracing, a prerequisite to qualify for any support at all in the process. These unprotected youth received a package of vegetable oil and bulgur wheat (described by faction leader Roosevelt Johnson, now Minister of Rural Development, as "some edible fat and half a bag of bulgur wheat") and many had nowhere to go or no way to reach their destination" (Ilene Cohn, "The Protection of Child Soldiers during the Liberian Peace Process," *The International Journal of Children's Rights,* Vol. 6, Issue 2, 1998, pp. 179–220, at pp. 196-197).

[649] Cohn, "The Protection of Child Soldiers during the Liberian Peace Process," p. 196.

[650] Three of my informants reported to serve in this unit and one of them specifically characterized it as being composed of child soldiers.

[651] The reported division was called 'Jungle Cat Brigade'.

soldiers.[652] While the absence of the INPFL on this list might be due to the group's dissolution in 1992, the lack of any reference to ***Ulimo-J*** might corroborate the findings from my interviews, which suggest that this group was not a significant recruiter of children. Informants in my sample reported 50% or fewer children in two of the faction's units, and only a 30% ratio in two of its brigades. As these percentages exceed the ones I identify further down in the text for the INPFL armed group, in relative terms Ulimo-J's overall child recruitment practice is assigned the value of 'medium low'.

The ***INPFL*** armed faction was another moderate recruiter of child soldiers. The group's units, where my informants served, were reported to have less than 50% of children. With this count, at the level of brigades the INPFL could have less than 30% of children. According to one ethnographic account of the Liberian conflict, many of Prince Johnson's INPFL Special Forces were "generally older men with extensive military experience."[653] Meanwhile, as one of my informants indicated, the Special Forces represented the INPFL's major battle unit and therefore must have absorbed more children than other divisions, such as the Guard Unit or the Battalion Unit.[654] Thus it appears that at their battalion level the Special Forces of the INPFL had more adults than children in their ranks. Overall, although Prince Johnson's group did have some children in its ranks, there were fewer of them than adults. Therefore, the value of the *child soldiering* variable in the case of the INPFL is designated as 'low'.

Section 3. Independent Variables: Do Armed Groups Differ in their Crucial Characteristics?

As described in Chapter 4 on methodology, the congruence method that I am employing in conducting my cross-case comparison of five Liberian armed factions is performed in three stages: 1) I identify the values of my independent variables; 2) I predict the outcome of the dependent variable on the basis of these values; and 3) I compare the actual outcomes of the case with the predicted values. More specifically, I examine across all five armed groups the values of *fighting capacity*, *material capacity*, *ethnic persecution*, and *territorial access.* I then use this information to generate predicted rates of factions' child soldier recruitment. Next, I compare these with the actual levels of children to adults, which I identified for the five armed groups in Section 2. The qualitative information compiled in my analysis and presented below to identify the values for the four independent variables is summarized in Tables A1, A2, A3 and A4 in the Appendices.

Fighting Capacity

The *fighting capacity* variable in my argument represents the demand for fighters, as I hypothesize that the ability to challenge the government increases the goals and ambitions of armed groups. The

[652] U.S. Department of State, *Liberia Human Rights Practices, 1995*, March 1996, URL: http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/democracy/1995_hrp_report/95hrp_report_africa/Liberia.html (last accessed on November 17, 2008).
[653] Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 113.
[654] From my interview with an INPFL ex-combatant in Ghana, winter 2008.

leaders of military effective factions, according to a stylized fact from my argument, often decide to make an attempt to overtake the capital or seriously challenge their opponent elsewhere. The ***NPFL*** faction from my case study clearly exhibited a higher level of fighting capacity relative to its major adversary – the government forces of the AFL, as well as to all other Liberian factions. According to Ellis, "the biggest and most powerful faction by most standards was the NPFL."[655] At the beginning of the conflict the NPFL overtook almost all Liberian territory in a very short period of time. The group's achievement could be contributed primarily to the striking inability of the AFL to suppress the rebel insurgency in the countryside, rather than to any extraordinary fighting skills of the NPFL fighters. In fact, unlike some other groups in the Liberian conflict, Taylor's forces did not have many professional soldiers in their ranks.[656] Despite this, however, "things were going badly for the AFL at the battlefront in Nimba County" in 1990 and most of the AFL soldiers sent to the countryside perished or deserted in fear.[657] The ineffectiveness of the government forces could be attributed to the fact that the AFL soldiers were "unable to distinguish the NPFL guerrillas among a generally hostile population," and, hence, "could make no headway, even with help from US military advisors."[658] AFL's helplessness in fighting the NPFL in the Nimba County is well summarized in the following account:

> "It wasn't the culture of Doe's soldiers to fight in the bush, and neither could they afford to lie on the ground in a fighting position as this would soil their uniforms. They would rather wait for the rebels on the highway where no mud would make their boots dirty than pursue them in the bush. Rain too was their enemy. They always ensured they drove to the heart of the battlefield, a practice which accounted for their constant destruction in truck-loads by the rebels. Not one soldier would survive the ambush to relay the story at the barracks. Yet their colleagues would be seen decorated with magazines, holding their M16 rifles and looking more intimidating than actor Rambo in the way they bluffed round Monrovia as if they were going for a walkover with the rebels."[659]

These losses of the first AFL army units dispatched to the Nimba County undermined the government's fighting capacity even further, as the initial failure to suppress the rebellion had two consequences. First, the AFL had to recruit more soldiers from both its reserves and general population in Monrovia. Witnesses noted that "young recruits were haphazardly trained and dispatched to the warfront to fight a war they were least equipped for."[660] Second, substantial AFL casualties scared many of its fighters, which led to tribal politics within the forces and, ultimately, increased desertion rates, as the following account elaborates:

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[655] Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 135.
[656] As I discuss below in the relevant sub-section, the INPFL, the LPC and Ulimo-J, for instance, had former professional army soldiers in their ranks.
[657] Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 77; Ogunleye, *Behind Rebel Line*, p.17.
[658] Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 78.
[659] Ogunleye, *Behind Rebel Line*, p. 17.
[660] Ibid., p. 30.

> "In the early days, men of all tribes were sent to the warfront, but when the death toll began to soar, Doe devised a strategy of preserving soldiers of his own Krahn tribe by sending only men of other ethnic groups to the battlefield. While Krahn soldiers remained secure in Monrovia, many soldiers of other tribes died in large numbers in the hands of the rebels. This caused a lot of resentment in the army. The result was mass defection and desertion, which explained why the remnants of Doe's forces, the AFL, were mostly of Krahn tribe."[661]

Since the core Krahn soldiers in the AFL were also the most trained ones, soldiers who were sent to the battlefront were probably the ones with the least military experience. Moreover, they were the ones with the weakest allegiance to the Krahn and Mandingo tribes, and thus could have no reservations to defect to the NPFL.[662] Assisted by the internal problems within the AFL army, that undermined its own potential capability to challenge the rebels, the NPFL, with its superior guerrilla tactics, was clearly outperforming the conventional government army in the countryside.[663] This allowed the group to take over most of the Liberian territory during the first several months of the conflict.

It was this stunning victory in the Nimba County followed by driving the government forces out of other Liberian territories that intensified the NPFL's determination to achieve its goal – overthrowing the Doe government in Monrovia. Ultimately, Taylor's forces lost all three major battles for the capital that they initiated, thus unable to defeat the government completely.[664] But the failure of the NPFL to overtake Monrovia at the end should not be a part of my assessment of the group's fighting capacity. If anything, this loss can be treated as an unfortunate outcome of the faction's ability to face its opponent in a direct military confrontation. What is more important, though, is that all three times, I argue, before storming the capital, Charles Taylor and his military command held a belief that their fighting capacity relative to the government was sufficiently strong to win the Monrovia battles. The *fighting capacity* of the NPFL armed group is therefore assessed as 'high' in my analysis. According to my argument, the level of child soldier recruitment in Taylor's group is then predicted to be 'high'.

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[661] Ibid., p. 31.

[662] As I elaborate at length later in this chapter, Krahn and Mandingo were targeted by the NPFL for persecution.

[663] It should not be implied that the AFL was a badly trained army. As Ellis correctly notices, the AFL was "an infinitely more experienced fighting unit than the NPFL" and it had modern weapons "in contrast to the ancient and poorly-maintained Beretta machine-guns which many NPFL fighters had received from old Libyan arsenals" in the initial stages of the conflict (Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, pp. 116, 118). However, whereas experience and weapon arsenals of the AFL were indeed crucial in determining its military capacity, these virtues were probably more suitable for the conventional war as opposed to guerrilla fighting in the bushes of the Nimba County and other rural terrain. Meanwhile, the fact that the NPFL was not engaging in conventional battles at that stage of the conflict but rather embarked on guerrilla struggle is widely admitted in the literature (for an example see Ogunleye, *Behind Rebel Line*, p. 133). To stress its difference from the conventional army, for example, the group introduced specific 'dress code' and behavior in its units. For instance, Ellis refers to rebel's strange image, that included wigs, nick-names, cars with mottos on them, as "a technique used by Liberians preparing for traditional forms of war rather than attempting to imitate the US-trained and live drab-clad soldiers of Doe's army" (Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 115). As to the behavior within the ranks of the group, cannibalism, for example, could be cited as the utmost expression of the non-conventional conduct of war.

[664] The three major battles I refer to are the armed contestations for the capital in July 1990, Operation Octopus in November 1992, and the 7-week long April 6 War that started in April 1996.

The ***LPC*** faction also proved to be a strong armed group in terms of its ability to create a significant challenge to its major opponent – the NPFL. Right after its launch at the end of 1993, by attacking the rebels, the George Boley's armed group gained from Taylor's forces a large portion of Liberian territories, and put up a staunch resistance in defensive battles against the NPFL fighters.[665] The high fighting capacity of the LPC can be explained by several factors. First, the group increased its fighting capacity relative to the NPFL by undermining the latter with its infamous but effective 'scorched earth' (or 'wasteland') policy. The Boley's group displaced civilians from the territories captured from Taylor's forces to the zones of its control and then burned the villages and destroyed the infrastructure of potential NPFL supporters.[666] Second, at least in the initial stages of its existence, the LPC was supported by Ecomog and the AFL.[667]

Overall, I argue, the value of the *fighting capacity* variable for the LPC relative to its major opponent, the NPFL, was 'high'. It was sufficient to substantially challenge Charles Taylor – an achievement that other factions did not attain. It was this initial success on the battlefront that made LPC's commanders aim for more victories. Unlike the NPFL, the LPC did not have to fight for the capital to get to power. On the contrary, it represented the capital's government while fighting a proxy war in alliance with the AFL and Ecomog. What constituted the LPC's highest goal was, if not to crush the NPFL completely, then at least push Taylor's forces from as much territory as possible. In future peace talks this would secure for the LPC a stronger negotiating position weighted against the relative amount of territory under the faction's military control. The high fighting capacity of the LPC allowed it to pursue this goal to the extent that by 1995 its leader George Boley was competing for presidency along with Charles Taylor in the political arena of Monrovia.[668] To achieve this indeed required more soldiers for capturing and defending as much territory from the NPFL as possible. Therefore, boosting its forces could be a likely reason for resorting to higher child soldier recruitment by the LPC.

Although ***Ulimo-K*** was one of the serious military actors in the First Liberian Civil War, it can be argued that the faction did not match the high fighting capacity of the NPFL and the LPC. First, even before the split of Ulimo into two sub-factions in 1994, the still united group was unable to offer a serious

[665] For example, one of my respondents commented on how the group sustained numerous attacks and defensive armed clashes with Taylor's forces between the Bong and Grand Bassa Counties (From my interview with a former LPC child soldier (Ghana, winter 2008)).
[666] "The Liberian Democratic Future Speaks on Issues of the Day," *The Perspective,* April 9, 1998; "Liberia," *Conciliation Resources Database.* This type of strategy was quite famous in many African conflicts. For example, in Burundian war the government displaced Hutu civilians and put them into IDP camps guarded by the state army soldiers in order to cut any civilian support to Hutu rebels – be it food supplies or the flow of recruits.
[667] Harris, "From 'Warlord' to 'Democratic' President," p. 453; Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy,* p. 102.
[668] Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 107.

challenge to Taylor's forces.[669] Second, Ulimo-K did not achieve many military victories over its major opponent of the NPFL in direct military confrontation. Two of the primary Ulimo-K's territorial gains – the upper Lofa County and parts of the Bong County – were both controversial. The faction's leader, Alhaji Kromah, with his Mandingo tribe wing, successfully entered into Liberia from Sierra Leone in August 1992, prior to the split of Ulimo. There were two remarkable facets about that military operation, however. First, it was reported that Kromah's wing of Ulimo had support of Ecomog commanders. For comparison, the group's earlier failure to defeat Taylor in May and June of 1992 could be attributed to a lack of Ecomog's assistance.[670] Second, the victory in August was due to treachery, with Ecomog officers being reported "to bribe some of Taylor's commanders" to allow Ulimo fighters through enemy lines.[671] This tactic was called "envelope politics" and represented a widespread practice in the Liberian conflict, whereby commanders of different armed groups received money (presumably, in an envelope) from their group's opponents to "lose" certain strategic military targets.

In September 1994, Ulimo-K successfully overtook Taylor's stronghold at the Gbarnga base. However, similar to Kromah's entry into Liberia in 1992, this military offensive was also a part of an operation supported by Ecomog, this time combined with the anti-NPFL coalition forces. The latter alliance was formed by 1994 under the LPC leader George Boley and composed of the LPC itself, the Lofa Defense Forces (LDF), and the Central Revolutionary Council of the NPFL (NPFL-CRC).[672] The success of ULIMO-K in the operation to overtake Gbarnga was not attributed to the enhanced support of the coalition forces, however. Time and again, envelope politics interfered with the military standoff. This time Ecomog and the coalition bribed the NPFL's prominent General Nixon Gaye as well as General Cassius Jacobs in charge of defending Gbarnga.[673] This event was nicknamed "Operation Envelope" among the NPFL fighters.[674] Shortly after Ulimo-K and coalition forces 'conquered' the NPFL's base, Taylor's forces recaptured it and in December 1994 established their military presence in Gbarnga again.

Since the NPFL was not the only armed group where commanders took bribes, as the examples below demonstrate, insurgents' ultimate gains and losses can be attributed to their actual fighting strength. For

[669] As one of my informants put it, "Taylor had advantage over Ulimo" (from my interview with a former Ulimo child soldier).
[670] For the Ecomog's support to the Ulimo-K faction see Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 98. Armed events between Ulimo and the NPFL in the upper Lofa County in May and June of 1992 are coded in the ACLED database as not resulting in any territorial transfers from the NPFL to Ulimo-K.
[671] After this incident Taylor purged his ranks which led to the disappearance of a number of high-ranking NPFL officers "in a wave of executions" (Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 98).
[672] The NPFL-CRC was yet another armed faction in the Liberian conflict, a small-sized one that broke from the NPFL in about 1994 (Major I.A. Nass, *A Study in Internal Conflicts: The Liberian Crisis and The West African Peace Initiative* (Enugu, Nigeria: Fourth Dimension Publishing Co. Ltd, 2000), pp. 115-116).
[673] Like many other NPFL generals who mutinied against Taylor, Gaye and Jacobs were "executed by the NPFL for treason" (Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 142).
[674] Nass, *A Study in Internal Conflicts,* p. 117.

instance, in the above example of the Gbarnga overtake by Ulimo-K and the coalition forces, it took the NPFL only two months to retake the base. Ironically enough, however, this recapture was also attributed to the envelope politics, this time in reverse. Apparently, the "NPFL leadership settled up the ULIMO-K leadership with money to facilitate the recapture of Gbarnga."[675] With the counter-bribing effect, what remains important for assessing groups' fighting capacity is the outcome of the actual power struggle. As to the Gbarnga base, for example, there were no other military attempts from Ulimo-K and the coalition forces to capture it as they retreated, leaving the base under the NPFL's control until the end of the war.

The known examples of direct military confrontation between the opponents without any apparent envelope politics involved could be more indicative of the armed groups' fighting capacity. Thus, for Ulimo-K such a situation did not occur until 1995, one year after its split from Ulimo, when it engaged in battles with the NPFL for the Lofa County. Ulimo-K lost all of these armed contests.[676] This evidence points to the fact that Ulimo-K must have had a lower fighting capacity than the NPFL. There might be several reasons for Kromah's group military ineffectiveness. First, the faction was organized around the core of Liberian politicians and businessmen, not army personnel, as in the case of the LPC armed group, for instance, which could actually withstand the direct armed confrontation with the NPFL.[677] Second, and probably more importantly, Ulimo-K's fighting capacity could be undermined by its constant armed struggle with another opponent – Ulimo-J. This contest effectively created the second war theater for Kromah's forces.

Although it is clear that Ulimo-K's fighting capacity was lower than the one of the NPFL and the LPC, it is also seen from the evidence above that the group possessed enough capability to at least engage its opponents in armed struggle, albeit without winning. This military capability of Ulimo-K could be explained, for example, by its ample supply of arms compared to all other factions. The group was said to be "exceptionally well provided with arms and ammunition, probably due to its proximity to the Sierra Leonean and Guinean border and its excellent relations with the Guinean army."[678] During the 1996-97 disarmament program, Ulimo-K "surrendered no fewer than 800,000 rounds of ammunition, more than all

[675] Ibid., p. 117.
[676] The battles in the Lofa County between Ulimo-K and the NPFL started in February 1995 and continued throughout June 1995, with all strategic points, such as Belleyellah, Gelahun, Zorzor, Kolahun and Voinjama being retaken by the NPFL immediately after their brief transfer to Ulimo-K (ACLED database).
[677] Most of the trained military personnel of Ulimo after the group's split left with Roosevelt Johnson's faction of Ulimo-J, and not with Kromah's Ulimo-K. Those were hundreds of trained Doe soldiers that made Ulimo a "potent military force" at earlier times (Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 96). This is because prior to the split the Krahn wing of Ulimo mobilized a lot of AFL veterans in Sierra Leonean refugee camps (Ibid., p. 95). Consider also a higher military experience of the leadership of Ulimo-K's predecessor, the LUDF organization, whose founder, General Albert Karpeh, used to be a US-trained special forces training officer and a former minister of Defense in Liberia (For more details on this see Section 1 of Chapter 7 of this dissertation and Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 94).
[678] The major arms supplies for the group were coming from Sierra Leone and possibly Guinea (Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 96).

the other factions put together."[679] In the absence of existing professional personnel, the group made an effort to cultivate some. Thus, Ulimo-K's new recruits were trained for no less than three months in at least four camps, including the one in Kanka, Guinea, presumably enjoying some expertise from Guinean soldiers.[680] For comparison purposes, note that most of the former NPFL child soldiers from my survey reported two weeks as the average length of their training.

Overall, despite its lower fighting capacity relative to the NPFL, its major opponent, Ulimo-K had the ability to establish and defend itself in the Lofa County for three years. After all, Ulimo-K was regarded as a legitimate player in the war, albeit "second-rate" compared to the NPFL.[681] It was probably this initial military success of Kromah's faction in the Lofa County that made him risk striving for a much bigger goal – overtaking Taylor's central military base at Gbarnga. Thus, Ulimo-K was able to challenge the NPFL, albeit marginally and mostly on the periphery. This challenge could not be compared to the one as strong as presented, for example, by the LPC to Taylor's fighters. Also, it was not enough to aspire to overtake the capital or gain a military establishment there to prevent Taylor's forces from winning Monrovia. But the group's current level of fighting capacity eventually put Kromah, a valid political player, in control of the financial sector of the interim Liberian government in 1995, in accordance with the Abuja peace agreement.[682] Overall, I would argue, Ulimo-K's fighting capacity can be regarded as 'medium high' and the *child soldiering* variable should be evaluated at about the 'medium high' level.

Fighting capacity of the ***Ulimo-J*** group was most likely lower than the one of Ulimo-K. Formed around the core fighters who used to be AFL soldiers in the Doe government and trained in Guinea with the help of the Guinean Army, Ulimo-J could have viably challenged Taylor's forces. However, apart from its battles with Ulimo-K and ability to win one county from it, Ulimo-J was not found to engage in any significant battles with any other factions in the Liberian war. Although Roosevelt Johnson's group was able to contest its rival faction of Ulimo-K in the groups' internal fight for control over natural resources, it was not in a position to attack the NPFL for territorial gains. It is also unclear if Ulimo-J participated in any defensive battles against Taylor's forces in order to protect its control of commercially

[679] Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 135. The following accounts also describe the Ulimo-K's ability to procure arms: "Indeed, it was widely perceived that, along with Taylor, Kromah had maintained stockpiles of weapons and an army in waiting, especially in mineral-rich areas contested with Ulimo-J. In February, Ecomog had found three truckloads of weapons at Kromah's base in Monrovia and placed him temporarily under house arrest (*Africa Confidential*, 28 March 1997). As late as May 1997, a large arms cache was uncovered in former Ulimo-K territory (*Agence France Presse*, 22 May 1997)" (Harris, "From 'Warlord' to 'Democratic' President," p. 444).
[680] Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 98. Three other camps were within Liberia and were located at the faction's bases in Kolahun, Voinjama, and Lofa Bridge. These bases were established by the Ulimo group, but after its split they were most likely inherited by Ulimo-K, not Ulimo-J, as they fell into the geographic areas of the Ulimo-K's control.
[681] Harris, "From 'Warlord' to 'Democratic' President," pp. 450-451.
[682] Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 107.

lucrative territories.[683] It is known that at some point Ulimo-J took over Kakata town, Margibi County, but the NPFL reestablished its positions there in 1996.[684]

Overall, I estimate the fighting capacity of Ulimo-J at 'medium low' level. It is this military inability to engage the NPFL fighters directly that could attenuate the ambitions of Ulimo-J in the Liberian conflict, in which the group devoted all its military strength and attention to the defense of its highly limited but extremely profitable territories from the rival Ulimo-K. It was the immediate profiteering from the Cape Mount and Bomi diamond mines that must have become a priority on the Ulimo-J's agenda, rather than a long-term strategy of challenging Charles Taylor militarily to ensure the group's access to political control of the resources it captured in war. When the group assisted the coalition forces in the barracks of the Barclay Training Center in Monrovia during the April 6 War, it was doing it as a deal with Ecomog in order to gain semi-official permission not to abandon its diamond mines.[685] Within the auspices of peace agreement, and as ordered by Ecomog, Ulimo-J was supposed to leave the mines and disarm. With 'medium low' level of Ulimo-J's fighting capacity, I would expect a mild demand by the faction for additional combatants and 'medium low' child soldier rates, as a result.

The fighting capacity of the ***INPFL*** armed group against its major opponent of the AFL in the capital could be assessed as rather low. It is true that this faction strongly challenged the government forces in Monrovia in 1990. Thus, it can be argued that if it was not for the Ecomog intervention, the INPFL would have been able to overtake the Presidential Mansion. However, as in the case of the NPFL, the INPFL's fighting capacity was insufficient to challenge the AFL after the latter was supported by Ecomog. After its short and almost successful advance to the capital in 1990, the INPFL's fighting capacity dropped as the strength of the AFL increased disproportionately with the reinforcement by the Ecomog contingent of 3,500 professional troops who arrived to Monrovia on August 24, 1990.[686]

The INPFL was also not capable of challenging the NPFL forces on its own and was acting mainly as a supplement to the AFL/Ecomog forces later in the war. The group sided with Ecomog to prevent the NPFL from taking over Monrovia and since then was contained to the Caldwell base in the capital. Technically, the INPFL fulfilled all the goals on its proclaimed agenda – it captured and executed President Doe and prevented the NPFL from entering the capital. Unlike Taylor, Prince Johnson has

[683] The ACLED database lists only one armed event between the NPFL and Ulimo-J – a skirmish in Kakata in 1996, just before the April 6 War.
[684] UN Security Council, *Sixteenth progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia*, 1 April 1996, S/1996/232, URL: http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3ae6aed128.html.
[685] It was also indeed a defensive strategy against the unexpected attack of combined forces of Taylor and Ulimo-K at that time on Ulimo-J's political leadership stationed in Monrovia.
[686] Nass, *A Study in Internal Conflicts*, p. 68. The strength of Ecomog increased to 6,000 troops by the end of 1990 (Ibid., p. 69).

never expressed publicly his desire to pave the way to presiding in the new government.[687] This low goal of the group, reflected in its 'low' level of *fighting capacity*, did not demand the INPFL to reinforce or mobilize significant numbers of infantry. Therefore, the probability of child soldier recruitment by the INPFL faction should be low.

What the example of the INPFL also suggests is that territorial control should not necessarily correlate with fighting capacity. Although the INPFL initially had high fighting capacity, this ability did not transform into the groups' strategy of acquiring territory. Instead, the forces were moving quickly from the Nimba County to the capital all the way across Liberia to perform a surgical strike on Monrovia. Ultimately, the amount of territory controlled by an armed group depends on the military strategy of its leadership who may prefer to control less as opposed to more land and people. In addition, as the previous examples of Ulimo-K and envelope politics demonstrated, there are other ways to gain territories from the opponent besides engaging in a direct military struggle.

Material Capacity

The ability of an armed group to compensate its soldiers was proposed in my explanatory framework to negatively affect the probability of an armed group to recruit children. Arguably, adults react to economic incentives and reduce the chances of the rebels' need to resort to child recruitment. The factor of *material capacity* had mixed support in my large-*N* analysis, when measured with diaspora support, third state assistance, and access to natural resources. The inconclusiveness of these results could have been attributed to at least two factors. First, the three different measures of the *material capacity* variable employed in the large-*N* analysis did not account for an important way of soldier compensation in some wars – looting of public and private goods and property. In the case study, however, I do analyze the difference across Liberian armed groups in allowing their soldiers to engage in such a practice.

Second, the measurement of *material capacity* in my statistical test was based on the assumption that armed groups possessing material resources will automatically redistribute at least some of them to reward recruits. As my case study analysis demonstrates, this is not necessarily the case. More specifically, all Liberian armed groups in my study were found to have some means of generating financial resources, as summarized in the following account: "From beginning to end of the war, each Liberian warlord of any substance had alliances with foreign businessmen and at least one foreign government."[688] At the same time, however, I also found that Liberian factions all differed in the type and form of actual provision for recruits: some were known to share the gains from trade in natural resources with their foot soldiers; other ones kept their fighters exclusively on loot; yet others paid their combatants cash salaries. Thus, in the case study analysis I relax the assumption behind groups' leadership

[687] In that fight the INPFL ended up siding with the AFL/Ecomog forces.
[688] Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 164.

willingness to share their resources with recruits. As a result, in my qualitative analysis I employ a more direct measure of armed groups' *material capacity* expressed in their exhibited practice of paying and compensating the fighters, rather than their hypothetical ability to do so. This is just another example of how the case study analysis allows going beyond approximations and offering more specific details, here on the sources from which the groups obtained their material capabilities, if any, and on how exactly they were compensating the fighters, if at all.

From 1990, after establishing its control in most of Liberia but Monrovia, the ***NPFL*** was enjoying the profits from the country's vast natural resource wealth. The group started with engaging in somewhat small financial operations, such as selling equipment from the German-owned mining company at Bong Mines site, which Taylor's forces captured in 1990.[689] On a somewhat larger scale, by late 1990, NPFL fighters in Lofa County towns fully controlled the barter trade of consumer goods from Liberia for diamonds, gold and agricultural products coming from Sierra Leone and Guinea.[690] With time, the NPFL resorted to "more sustainable" sources of income.

Upon creation of the so-called 'Greater Liberia', Taylor appointed former Doe government personnel to establish relationship and trading networks with foreign businesses, companies and individuals. As a result, the group penetrated the logging industry with former international agents helping Taylor organize the concessions in 1990.[691] In 1991, the French imports of raw logs from Liberia, with almost all logging areas being under the NPFL control, reached 94.4 million cubic meters.[692] Trade and concessions in other industrial commodities also picked up speed. For example, the NPFL deals with foreign businesses in the iron mining sector in the Nimba County generated significant levies for the faction.[693] Its stakes in the rubber production at the Firestone Plantation also brought substantial revenues for the group.[694] At some point of its existence the NPFL enjoyed access to Sierra Leonean diamond fields as well.[695] Altogether, in 1991 the IMF estimated the aggregate figure for exports from Liberia to reach $557 million, which is higher than the $410 million in the pre-war year of 1989.[696]

While compensating its high ranking commanders from natural resource profits, the NPFL did not pay its foot soldiers down the group's hierarchy chain. One of my informants mentioned that only the Special Forces elite troops of the armed group "had the money":

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[689] William Reno, *Warlord Politics and African States* (Lynne Rienner, 1998), p. 95. The following discussion of the NPFL's material capacity is largely based on this book's intricate analysis of financial means of African rebels.
[690] Ibid., p. 97.
[691] Ibid., p. 95.
[692] Ibid., p. 97. For more detailed description of revenues extracted by the NPFL from logging concessions see Reno, *Warlord Politics and African States*, pp. 96-97.
[693] Ibid., p. 100.
[694] Ibid., p. 100.
[695] Ibid., p. 98; Kieh, *The First Liberian Civil War*, p. 158.
[696] Reno, *Warlord Politics and African States*., p. 97.

> "NPFL had Special Forces too. Private could not go close. Cannot eat there where they eat. But not on the frontline. Those Special Forces had money, enjoyed themselves."[697]

Not only did the NPFL abstain from paying its soldiers, sometimes commanders did not even feed combatants. Similarly to the restricted hierarchical distribution of natural resource profits, the scarce food was also carefully allocated, as the following account suggests:

> "In Nimba with Delta Force there was less food. And it went only to bigger people. And there were more people to provide food for. Delta Force food was not enough. Only to bigger men, not you."[698]

Another former child soldier, whom I interviewed and who participated in both the First and Second Liberian Civil Wars, attested to the absence of compensation practices by the NPFL to its forces in the first conflict as opposed to the introduction of salary payments to soldiers in the second one.[699]

Devoid of direct material rewards to its soldiers, the NPFL group not only allowed but sometimes even encouraged its new recruits to loot. Many IOs, for instance, reported widespread looting and human rights abuses by Taylor's fighters.[700] Consider how the faction's ethnic mobilization campaign in the Nimba County was concurrently organized around looting opportunities:

> "Many of those joining NPFL were seemed more intent on looting than on confronting the AFL soldiers or on slaughtering their supposed enemies, and many Mandingo people were probably killed at least as much because of their status as shopkeepers and traders as on account of any political errors they were deemed to have made." "Their attackers acquired so much booty from those victims that some people thought it obvious that 'their motive was not liberating the people but looting their properties by use of the gun'."[701]

Looting by the NPFL forces was occurring during the battles for Monrovia in 1990, 1992, and 1996.[702] While some Taylor's fighters retired from the war materially enriched, not all soldiers succeeded in obtaining the booty, and those who actually did, usually had to give it to their commanders.[703] Overall, while not paying its soldiers, the NPFL allowed some to benefit from looting, but in many cases, however, the stolen goods were confiscated from soldiers by the higher ranking personnel. As I show in the discussion below, compared to all other armed groups in my case study, with a possible exception of

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[697] From my interviews with former child soldiers in Ghana, winter 2008. Commandos of the NPFL's Special Forces, to whom my informant refers to, were actually the ones who oversaw the group's commercial operations (Reno, *Warlord Politics and African States*, p. 95).
[698] From my interviews with former child soldiers in Ghana, winter 2008.
[699] From my interviews with former child soldiers in Ghana, winter 2008. During the Second Liberian Civil War (1999-2003) Taylor's soldiers represented the official government forces of GoL (Government of Liberia) under his presidency and, as such, they received salaries as any other state army.
[700] For one source refer to Human Rights Watch, *Human Rights Abuses by the Liberian Peace Council and the Need for International Oversight*, HRW Report, Vol. 6, No. 3, May 17, 1994.
[701] Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, pp. 79, 114.
[702] Ibid., p. 124.
[703] For a more detailed discussion of this tendency refer to the relevant sub-section of my temporal case study in Chapter 7 of this dissertation.

the LPC, Taylor's faction offered the worst material 'package' to potential new recruits in the country who would be willing to join a military organization for pecuniary rewards. Therefore, the value of the *material capacity* variable for the NPFL can be estimated as 'low', which, in turn, predicts high rate of children in the ranks of the group.

The ***LPC*** armed group had access to trade in logs, diamonds, gold and rubber.[704] As early as 1993, less than a year after its existence, it captured the Liberian Agriculture Company's profitable rubber plantation outside of the Buchanan port.[705] The group was reported to "use access to means of accumulation, in this case a rubber plantation, to cultivate a support of fighters."[706] As of 1995, the LPC possessed gold deposits in Ivory Coast where it had a military base.[707] The group also exercised control over timber production and exportation, with the latter facilitated by doing business with Ecomog, "which controlled the main ports."[708]

Similar to the NPFL, the LPC developed and used its commercial operations' network to generate its financial means. Whether the gains from its resources were actually used to compensate the group's fighters remains questionable. There is no indication that the LPC paid its soldiers directly.[709] Moreover, the accounts of massive looting by the faction's foot soldiers suggest the absence of other compensations from the group's trade networks' benefits.[710] In 1995, LPC fighters were reported to sell Liberian looted goods in Ivory Coast for rice, soap and fuel.[711] While the group was indeed caught in its looting behavior, it is very hard to assess whether the practice was restricted to some fighters or units only and whether low-ranking soldiers had to submit the stolen items to their commanders, as NPFL fighters were obliged to do. There are accounts that the group provided food both to its fighters and their families, as one former LPC child soldier indicated in my interview.[712]

Overall, it can be concluded with relative certainty that the LPC armed group did not provide a viable material compensation in terms of cash payments to its foot soldiers. However, it is possible, albeit not definitively established, that its soldiers, even the low-ranking ones, could enjoy the benefits of looting. With certain data limitations the level of the *material capacity* variable in the case of the LPC can be estimated at 'medium'. These values predict 'medium' scope of child recruitment for the group.

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[704] Ibid., p. 102.
[705] Reno, *Warlord Politics and African States*, p. 105. The profits of the company must have been high as the export was flourishing. Consider, for example, that between September 1994 and February 1995 there were nineteen shipments of rubber recorded from Monrovia's Freeport (Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 167).
[706] Reno, *Warlord Politics and African States*, p. 105.
[707] Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 179.
[708] Ibid., p. 104.
[709] One LPC child soldier in my survey specifically mentioned that there were no monetary payments in his unit.
[710] For the accounts of the LPC soldiers' looting practices see "Liberia," *Conciliation Resources Database.*
[711] Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 179.
[712] From my interviews with former Liberian child soldiers in Ghana, Winter 2008.

The ***Ulimo-K*** faction also had access to some concessions and loot. Unlike the LPC, however, the group did not have to rely on Ecomog for exportation means as it "was trading directly across the northern border with Guinean officers."[713] It was the Krahn military wing of Ulimo before its split that had successfully negotiated diamond deals with international merchants. It is unknown whether Allhaji Kromah managed to get hold of at least a part of this profitable trade or not.[714] I also could not verify if Ulimo-K profited from its control of timber resources in the upper Lofa County.[715] But it is well known that "the faction had its own immigration and customs services through which it controlled travelers' movements and levied taxes on traders."[716]

It has been well documented that Ulimo-K was the most astute of all Liberian factions in terms of looting.[717] After taking control of the upper Lofa County, the group was involved in extensive plundering of the property of the local Loma and Kpelle tribes, who expelled Mandingo from the county during the initial stages of the conflict.[718] The purpose of Ulimo-K's return to the Lofa County, in fact, was to take back what belonged to the Mandingo people prior to the war and was taken away during the NPFL's arrival to Lofa back in 1990.[719] One extreme example of such ubiquitous looting is a systematic pillaging by Ulimo-K fighters of the sacred groves of the Poro society in the Lofa County, where soldiers stole masks and other religious objects of the Loma and Kpelle people to sell them on the international antique markets through Guinean dealers.[720]

Overall, it can be argued that material compensation to adult soldiers in Ulimo-K was established. It came primarily in the form of a wide-scale looting of civilians. Unlike in the case of the NPFL and possibly the LPC, however, Ulimo-K soldiers were allowed to possess and sell their own booty without passing it up the chain of command. Thus, the compensation of soldiers in case of Ulimo-K did occur in the form of widely distributed access-to-all loot, which means that those who joined had a chance to benefit significantly. The variable of the *material capacity* in the case of Ulimo-K is assigned the value of 'medium'. While this level in relative terms is higher than the 'low' one for the NPFL, it is still lower than the values that I establish for two other Liberian armed groups, as shown below. The child recruitment practice in Kromah's faction, according to the *material capacity* explanatory factor, should be expected to be at the 'medium' range as well.

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[713] Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 104.
[714] For plans within the Mandingo wing of Ulimo to access diamond trade refer to Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 97.
[715] That control was established in August 1992, when Kromah's wing of the Ulimo faction entered Liberia from Sierra Leone (Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 98).
[716] Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 134.
[717] Ibid., p. 134.
[718] Ibid., p. 134.
[719] Ibid., p. 134.
[720] Ibid., p. 128.

Unlike in Ulimo-K, the ***Ulimo-J*** soldiers were not permitted to plunder. In fact, the armed group's leadership was punishing its members for looting civilians. As a viable financial option to looting, however, Ulimo-J introduced cash payments to its fighters.[721] The group did have plenty of financial means to support this practice. First, it was aided by Ecomog with arms, ammunition, intelligence, and transport, among other military assistance, which alleviated the group's costs necessitated otherwise by arms purchases and logistics.[722] Second, the Roosevelt Johnson's faction of Ulimo-J "became involved ine mining operations in mineral-rich Bomi County, the site of most of Liberia's diamond production."[723] The compensation practice of Ulimo-J was noted in the literature, as the following account demonstrates: "As with Taylor's NPFL, local commanders distributed opportunities to mine alluvial diamonds and gold to maintain control over fighters… ULIMO-J fighters and commanders also profited from a transit trade in diamonds from illicit operations in Sierra Leone."[724] It is possible that the practice of Ulimo-J commanders to pay their soldiers did not last throughout the war, however. For instance, one former child soldier, recruited for the group in 1995, reported during my interviews that he was compensated $50 per month about 3-4 times before payments ceased and the soldiers in his unit were allowed to loot. Indeed, this does not necessarily mean that adult salaries were also cut off as time went on. In itself, though, the practice of Ulimo-J to pay its fighters, even children, is quite remarkable, as none of the former child soldiers from other groups, whom I interviewed, recalled similar practice, albeit intermittent one, in their units. Overall, the material capability of Ulimo-J can be assessed as 'high', and its practice of paying soldiers was outstanding compared to other Liberian factions. Following my argument, we should expect 'low' level of *child soldiering* variable in this case.

The only possible match to Ulimo-J in its compensation to foot soldiers was the ***INPFL*** – yet another extraordinary group in this regard. The INPFL also prohibited looting and pillaging civilians, and was known for its implementation and enforcement of a very strict discipline code for combatants.[725] It is not certain whether INPFL soldiers got their salaries in cash, although it is a possibility. It has been established, however, that both children and adults alike were fed by the group at the base and even given food supplies to take home to their families.[726] These food supplies were coming primarily from the INPFL's control of the Freeport in Monrovia.[727] This food currency, meanwhile, must have been

[721] Some former Ulimo-J combatants attested to this practice during my interviews with them in Ghana, in winter 2008.
[722] Herbert Howe, *Ambiguous Order: Military Forces in African States* (London: Lynne Rienner, 2000), p. 141.
[723] Reno, *Warlord Politics and African States*, p. 105.
[724] Ibid., p. 105.
[725] Looting was explicitly prohibited and severely punished by a special unit of the faction (The Military Police Unit) created to monitor and regulate the behavior of its fighters (from my interview with a member of the INPFL's Military Police Unit; Ghana, winter 2008).
[726] From my interview with a former INPFL soldier, Ghana, winter 2008.
[727] From my interview with a former Liberian child soldier in Ghana, winter 2008.

immensely valuable at those times in the capital, where food shortages were extreme.[728] According to one of my respondents, money was meaningless in Monrovia in those days, loosing its value against the only precious commodity at that time – rice. For example, a bag of rice in Monrovia in early 1990s cost about $100, according to my interviewee.[729]

Under such circumstances, food, as opposed to money compensations, could have, in fact, attracted to the faction a bigger pool of adults seeking survival from hunger in exchange for their military services.[730] As one of my informants commented on the voluntary nature of recruitment for the INPFL armed group in Monrovia in 1990, there was no need to conscript people forcibly as lots of them joined willingly because of hunger and disease, which prevailed before relief came with Ecomog.[731] Therefore, the factor of *material capacity* and, more specifically, the ability to compensate soldiers by the INPFL can be assigned a 'high' value. My argument predicts a 'low' level of child recruitment for such a group.

Ethnic Persecution

My argument suggests that armed groups involved in conflicts with ethnic killings are more prone to recruiting children. This is because minors are believed to side with both perpetrators and defenders either to avoid violence against themselves and their families, or as a result of being orphaned by the ethnic cleansing in the country. In my cross-group case study, all five Liberian armed groups were operating in the same conflict, implying no difference in their county levels of the *ethnic persecution* variable – the measurement that I employed in the large-*N* analysis. Therefore, in this qualitative analysis, I further disaggregate the concept of *ethnic persecution* and examine if a particular faction had access to people of the 'endangered' tribes whose children could have had a motive for seeking protection within a military organization. More specifically, I identify and then examine the regions, where groups operated, for ethnic demographics and severe tribal tensions. This allows me to assess systematically the relative chances of each of the five Liberian armed groups to encounter desperate children.

In the early stages of its existence, the ***NPFL*** armed group attracted large numbers of supporters from the Gio tribe – mainly victims of the Doe government's indiscriminate violent counter-insurgency campaign in the Nimba County. After the NPFL's first attack in the Nimba County, the AFL soldiers responded by detaining suspects there, "which in practice meant singling out young Gio men for arrest or execution while committing other brutalities in a region which the Krahn-dominated military regarded as

[728] When Ecomog first arrived to Monrovia in August 1990, apparently many people of the capital were starving which made the troops establish feeding centers around the city (Nass, *A Study in Internal Conflicts*, p. 68).
[729] From my interview with an NPFL ex-combatant in Ghana, winter 2008.
[730] It should be noted here that the situation in the countryside, where some people were still growing crops, was different. The money in the countryside was still a useful currency and food was available for purchase unlike in Monrovia, where the only source of edible supplies was in the Freeport controlled by armed factions, not civilians.
[731] From my interview with a former INPFL child soldier (Ghana, winter 2008).

enemy territory."[732] When government soldiers were dispatched into the Nimba County, some people of the Gio and related Mano tribes ran into the bush to hide or fled to Guinea, while others chose to join the rebels to protect themselves and avenge the deaths of their relatives.

Another indirect example of people joining Taylor's proxy group for defense purposes against ethnic persecution refers to the Loma and Kpelle people from the upper Lofa County. When in 1993 Mandingo fighters from Ulimo-K entered the Lofa County, from which they were expelled at the beginning of the conflict in 1990, in revenge they were conducting misdeeds to the Lofa and Kpelle dwellers of the region. To defend themselves, the latter were joining *en masse* both the NPFL and its proxy group – the LDF.[733]

While some tribes were joining the NPFL to protect themselves against government persecution policies, Taylor's forces had probably the worst accounts out of all Liberian groups in terms of their genocidal behavior during the conflict. The group's initial mobilization campaign, as described in more detail in Chapter 7, was built on igniting ethnic tensions between Gio and Mano tribes on the one side, and Krahn and Mandingo on the other.[734] "Taylor's fighters, despite having an appalling record, aimed much of their violence in the early days against Krahn, Mandingos and suspected Doe supporters, groups that had not endeared themselves in recent times to the rest of the population."[735]

No region was spared, but the massive purges occurred mainly in the places of predominant residence of the Krahn and Mandingo tribes. For instance, Mandingo of the Nimba and Lofa Counties experienced a massive purging campaign.[736] Some of them managed to escape to Guinea or, less so, to Sierra Leone, but others had to encounter the perpetrators. For example, the Mandingo people who managed to run from the Nimba villages of Kahnplay, Bahn and Butuo reported as early as January 1990 that many of their tribesmen died at the hands of Taylor's rebels in gruesome scenes of violence much like the one in the following account of a surviving victim:

> "They [Taylor's people] came at nine in the morning. They surrounded the houses and started shooting at everything. Then they began burning our homes. They used gas to set fire to the thatch, and when we could no longer stand the heat inside we had to go out into the street. And as we left our homes the rebels fell upon us. I saw five, maybe six bodies. My neighbors. They had their throats cut. And then we ran. We all ran. Everybody was running."[737]

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[732] Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, pp. 77-78. For a larger discussion of this event refer to Section 1 of Chapter 7, which elaborates on the mobilization of Gio and Mano people for the NPFL faction.
[733] Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 105. For more information on the LDF faction and historical grievances of Loma and Kpelle people against the Mandingo tribe refer to Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, pp. 128-129. Also, see more information on this incident in the text below dedicated to the *ethnic persecution* variable in the context of the Ulimo-K armed group.
[734] Later on, as the NPFL went on to most of the Liberian territory from the Nimba County, the group mobilized other tribes as well to fight against the Krahn and Mandingos.
[735] Harris, "From 'Warlord' to 'Democratic' President," p. 447.
[736] Lofa was home to most of the Liberian Mandingos, who were believed to migrate at some point in history from neighboring Guinea and who still had roots and connections in that country.
[737] Huband, *The Liberian Civil War*, p. 12.

Many of the "most egregious" NPFL offenses also took place in Grand Gedeh County, "where Gio and Mano NPFL fighters exacted revenge against their Krahn ethnic rivals."[738] Another highlight in the black list of Taylor's fighters and their misdeeds rests on the atrocities against both Krahn and Mandingo populations in Monrovia. Most of the victims from the capital were killed at the infamous NPFL checkpoints while attempting to escape the country to neighboring Sierra Leone.[739]

Krahn and Mandingo, although the first targets of the NPFL's searches for "enemies," were not the only victimized tribes. In the Grand Gedeh County and elsewhere, the Grebo and Sapo ethnic groups were also often killed for mere resemblance of their tribal language to the related Krahn dialect, as poorly educated rebels could not distinguish the difference.[740] In the Nimba County, many Vai and Mende people were often mistaken for Mandingo and killed simply because they were also Muslims.[741]

With its control of at least half of Liberia at different times, Taylor's group was present in most regions where people were victims of genocidal practices of the AFL, Ulimo-K, or, more frequently, the NPFL itself. Therefore, the NPFL had the best chance out of all Liberian factions to be the last resort to those endangered tribes whose only way to survive besides fleeing the country was to join the group. The tribes of Gio and Mano could thus defend themselves against indiscriminate killing by the AFL, whereas Loma and Kpelle in Lofa could have been spared of the pillaging and terror campaigns of Ulimo-K. Besides these 'endangered' tribes, other ethnic groups, by joining the NPFL, also could assure their physical survival in the conflict where searching for enemy could have been misguided from its original tribal lines. Therefore, the value of the *ethnic persecution* variable in the case of the NPFL is estimated at 'high' level, and the rate of child enlistment in such a group should also be 'high'. In fact, according to my survey, the ratio of all NPFL children who joined for the reasons of protection was rather high at about 34% of all children and 71% of those children who joined the group voluntarily.

Reasons of protection from ethnic violence could have been relevant to some children found in the territories under ***LPC*** control. For example, the Boley's faction took over the area of the Grand Gedeh County from the NPFL in 1994. This was the county where Taylor's fighters committed the worst atrocities against the Krahn tribe, persecuting all those who did not manage to flee the country or hide in the forest in an attempt to save their lives.[742] While some Krahn and Mandingo children were joining the

[738] U.S. Department of State, "Liberia Human Rights Practices, 1995."
[739] This type of checkpoints was established on all major roads across the country, and not only in Monrovia (Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 116). There were over twenty of such checkpoints along the 70km road between Monrovia and Kakata (Ogunleye, *Behind Rebel Line,* p. 85).
[740] Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 114.
[741] Ibid., p. 114.
[742] Massive numbers of Krahn from Grand Gedeh flew to Sierra Leone and Ivory Coast through non-captured Liberian territory. Some of my interviewees, who were hiding in the forests of Grand Gedeh, provided the stories of barely sustainable living in the bush along with their entire pre-war communities. Indeed, the biggest of the hardships reported was starvation and dying of many in the forest from hunger and diseases. One of the participants

NPFL prior to the LPC's arrival, afterwards they had a chance to side with the group that was actually fighting for their tribal power and privileges. Thus, 50% of the former LPC child soldiers in my survey reported joining for defensive reasons – higher than the 34% of those from the NPFL faction.[743] Overall, I would argue, the LPC's access to endangered tribes was 'high'. From this value and with the known high percentage of children who reported joining the group for defense, we should indeed expect a high ratio of children to adults in the LPC.

The spread of geographical presence of ***Ulimo-K*** included Guinean territories outside of Liberia and the upper Lofa with Cape Mount Counties within the country. It can be argued that both adults and children in Guinean refugee camps were protected against ethnic persecution raging in the midst of the conflict in Liberia. It is true that Mandingo in Guinea wanted to make their way back into the Lofa County, from which they were fleeing after the NPFL took over. However, that alone does not constitute a security motive for children to join a rebel movement, according to my definition and measure of the *ethnic persecution* variable. If anything, the potential mobilization of children in refugee camps, albeit along the ethnic lines, was based on ideological reasons or material benefits. The Cape Mount County did not host Krahn or Mandingo (it was a home to the Gola, Kpelle and Vai ethnic groups), so there was no widespread ethnic persecution by the NPFL in that county. Similarly, after killing or chasing away all Mandingo from the upper Lofa County, the NPFL was not targeting the remaining tribes there – mostly Loma and Kpelle. Therefore, there was no obvious reason for the adults and children of those counties to join Ulimo-K for defense.

At the same time, however, in both the Lofa and Cape Mount Counties, where Ulimo-K operated, the group itself was abusing civilians. While it is most likely that the maltreatment in the Cape Mount County was primarily in the form of looting civilians, in the Lofa County violence also escalated into ethnic killings. According to Williams, "upon capturing Lofa from the NPFL, ULIMO-K's Muslim militiamen went on a killing spree, particularly targeting Christians."[744] However, this spark of violence in the Lofa County "led to the emergence" of yet another armed faction in the Liberian conflict – the LDF – which functioned primarily as a defense militia with the proclaimed goal "to liberate Lofa from all marauding armed gangs and protect life and property of Liberia."[745] In other words, the non-Muslim tribes of the Lofa County had an option to defend themselves by joining their own faction of the LDF, rather than

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of such events challenged me during our casual chat over the pizza and Pepsi one day in Accra, Ghana, in February 2008, if I could survive without food and water for two weeks like he did once during those times.

[743] For comparison purposes note that 11% and 8% of the former LPC and NPFL child soldiers in my sample reported joining because they "supported the group's political goals" (From my survey of former Liberian combatants in Ghana, winter 2008). Unfortunately, systematic comparison of the reasons provided by children to explain their recruitment was not possible across other armed groups due to a small number of observations in my sample of child soldiers in the INPFL, Ulimo-J and Ulimo-K armed groups.

[744] Williams, *Liberia*, pp. 182-83.

[745] Ibid., p. 183.

siding with perpetrators in exchange for protection. The abused population could have also joined the NPFL armed group, which was stationed nearby and did not harass the non-Mandingo tribes of the Lofa.

Overall, it can be concluded that in the case of Ulimo-K, children in both refugee camps and territories under the group's control were either not facing ethnic cleansing or had alternative options to protect themselves, such as joining their own ethnic defense militia. Therefore, the *ethnic persecution* variable in the case of Ulimo-K is assigned the value of 'low'. According to my argument, one should also expect a 'low' level of child soldier recruitment for this group.

The ***Ulimo-J*** faction got organized and mobilized mainly in the refugee camps of Sierra Leone and Guinea, with the support of Krahn and Mandingo refugees. While these two tribes were the ones endangered by the NPFL in Liberia from the war onset, they did not face imminent danger of ethnic persecution and were protected from tribal violence in the refugee environment.[746] The refugees joined Ulimo-J as they wanted to go back to Liberia and regain what was taken away from them by the NPFL – land, power, and property. If anything, mobilization of people was more ideological rather than fear-based. Similarly, while in Liberia, Ulimo-J operated in the lower Lofa County and the Cape Mount County where civilians were not persecuted on ethnic grounds by the NPFL, as these regions did not host the Krahn or Mandingo tribes or Doe government officials.[747] Ulimo-J was also present in the Bomi County, a home to the Dei and Gola tribes, not an ethnic target of Ulimo-J or the NPFL.[748] Therefore, it might be claimed that people in the territories where Ulimo-J operated did not face imminent danger of ethnic or any other persecution, and thus the group's value on the variable of *ethnic persecution* can be assigned as 'low'.[749] This, in turn, makes the expected degree of child recruitment for the group 'low'.

As a splinter group from the NPFL, the ***INPFL*** inherited both its predecessor's objective to oust the ruling regime of President Doe and Taylor militiamen's strategy of achieving it by executing members of the dominating tribe. On its march from the Nimba County to Monrovia, the INPFL was arbitrarily killing Krahn and people associated in any way with the Doe army.[750] However, Krahn dwellers of Greater Monrovia could protect themselves from such practices by siding with the AFL army of their own ethnicity or relocating to areas where Ecomog troops were stationed. One informant from my survey, for instance, who was of Kpelle tribal origin, complained that the "AFL was protecting only Krahn in

[746] I could not locate any accounts on the incidents of ethnic violence in refugee camps of Guinea or Sierra Leone.
[747] Lower Lofa was home to the Gbandi, Kissi and Mende tribes, whereas Cape Mount County hosted primarily Gola and Vai (*Liberia: Cultural and Spiritual Landscape*, map).
[748] *Liberia: Cultural and Spiritual Landscape*, map.
[749] In fact, civilians in those counties were enjoying some sort of *modus vivendi* with the rebels (Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 143).
[750] In my interviews former child soldiers reported such practice by the INPFL in the Caldwell area of Monrovia and in Fendell IDP camp near the capital (From my interviews in Ghana, winter 2008).

Monrovia" in 1990.[751] He happened to live amongst Krahn in one area of the capital and said that at some point the AFL took the entire community "to the barrack," supposedly for protection purposes.[752] Later in the conflict, the same informant moved "for food and protection" to the Freeport area with extensive Ecomog presence.[753] While the Krahn people had no reasons for joining the INPFL armed group in the presence of more viable defense options in the capital, other tribes in Monrovia were not facing any ethnic targeting that could make the INPFL a better defendant than the AFL or Ecomog. Prince Johnson's group itself was reported to be "nice" to people in the capital and had "moderate, smooth relations" with Monrovian civilians.[754] For instance, it was observed that the INPFL was "sharing" food with civilians and the latter "provided shelter" for the group's soldiers.[755] Overall, the *ethnic persecution* variable in the case of the INPFL is assigned the value of 'low', thus necessitating an expectation of 'low' child to adult ratios in the faction.

Territorial Access

The *territorial access* factor was the strongest predictor of child soldier recruitment by armed groups in my statistical analysis. My argument implies that the amount of territory under a group's control signifies the level of its access to potential child recruits. In my large-*N* study the *territorial access* was a categorical variable with the value of 0 for no territorial access or control, the value of 1 for territorial control in the home country or access to refugee camps abroad, and the value of 2 for both. My case study analysis allows me to disaggregate this level of measurement into a more specific one, as I explore, for instance, the number of Liberian counties or refugee hosting countries abroad that each group had access to at different stages of war.

In my explanatory framework it was assumed that larger territorial possessions of armed groups increase their chances to encounter towns and villages inhabited with people where children can be found. However, this assumption may or may not hold in reality. Thus, it is possible that by gaining access to a certain territory, an armed group finds itself in a depopulated terrain due to either low population density or conflict-inflicted migration flows. In order to subject the logic of the territorial access argument to empirical testing one would have to verify such an assumption – precisely what the case study allows me to do. Thus, in my qualitative analysis I look at both – accessibility of territories and availability of manpower in them – to assess the level of the *territorial access* variable and thus the probability of child recruitment by armed groups.

[751] From my interviews with Liberians in Ghana, winter 2008.
[752] Ibid.
[753] Ibid.
[754] From two accounts during my interviews with Liberians in Ghana, winter 2008.
[755] From one account during my interviews with Liberians in Ghana, winter 2008.

The territorial control argument and its mechanism linking child recruitment to groups' access to people, including children, are especially important in the context of the Liberian conflict, which was associated with massive displacement of people and depopulation of whole regions. Throughout the 1989-96 war, there were about 700,000 to 800,000 of Liberian refugees dwelling abroad.[756] The numbers of IDPs varied from 600,000 to one million.[757] These figures are staggering. Essentially, from half to three quarters of Liberian pre-war population of 2.6 million was displaced internally or as refugees throughout the war.[758] In fact, Liberia ranked "as the second largest generator of African refugees after Mozambique" and was "believed to have the highest number of refugees per capita in the world."[759] The following accounts of a British journalist visiting the Nimba County in January 1990 set the above figures into perspective against the reality:

> "…we headed to where the rebels were, past villages deserted by all but the few goats or chickens left behind to amble among upturned pots and into huts whose doors had been torn from their hinges."[760]
> "We drove fast, through villages either empty or occasionally inhabited by a few women and young children."[761]

These accounts refer to the Nimba County where civilians were fleeing from both rebel fighters and the AFL forces, in fear of intimidating behavior of soldiers.[762] The region's villages and towns located along the major roads to Monrovia were abandoned ahead of the advances of Taylor's fighters, upon radio instructions of the Doe government.[763] At the same time, places like Saniquellie in Nimba were deserted because of fear of the army soldiers, not the rebels.[764]

According to the World Refugee Survey, much of the Liberian territory was "under-populated" throughout the war, and people who have not left the country were clustered in the two largest cities –

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[756] The years of 1990 and 1994 featured higher numbers, whereas the years of 1991, 1992 and 1993 probably had a lower estimate (Veronica Nmoma, "The Civil War and the Refugee Crisis in Liberia," *The Journal of Conflict Studies*, Vol. XVII, No. 1, Spring 1997, pp. 101-125, at p. 110).
[757] "As of December 1992, the number of Liberians internally displaced totaled some 600,000" (Nmoma, "The Civil War and the Refugee Crisis in Liberia," p. 114). Around one million Liberians were recorded to be displaced in 1994 and 1995.
[758] "Before the later part of 1991, about half of the country's inhabitants had fled to neighboring states or were internally displaced" (Nmoma, "The Civil War and the Refugee Crisis in Liberia," p. 110). By the middle of 1994, "75 percent of the Liberian people were uprooted from their homes" (Nmoma, "The Civil War and the Refugee Crisis in Liberia," p. 116). 2.6 million figure comes from Scott, "Liberia," in Cohen and Deng, eds., *The Forsaken People*, p. 113.
[759] Nmoma, "The Civil War and the Refugee Crisis in Liberia," p. 110.
[760] Huband, *The Liberian Civil War*, p. 9.
[761] Ibid., p. 71.
[762] Whereas Mandingo dwellers of the Nimba County, fearful of NPFL atrocities, were gathering around government soldiers' military installations, Gio and Mano were fleeing the AFL violent acts into the bush and across the border to Guinea (Ibid., p. 12).
[763] Huband, *The Liberian Civil War*.
[764] Ibid., p. 12. Most of the town's ten thousand residents ran into the bush or to Guinea.

Monrovia and Buchanan – with only a quarter-million to a half-million living in the rest of the country.[765] It is those 250,000-500,000 people that had to be contested between armed groups as a recruitment pool within Liberia. Under such circumstances of immense manpower shortage in the country, the amount of physical territory controlled by a faction seeking recruits should be either extremely important, in the cases where there are people to be found, or inconsequential, in the cases where most people fled the area.

What also matters in the case of a vastly depopulated country, such as Liberia during the war, is the access of armed groups to the populations of IDPs and refugees, who are more likely to be located outside of the territories controlled by insurgents. With more than a million of Liberian civilians – that being over 55% of all people remaining in the country – living in the Greater Monrovia security zone under Ecomog's protection, it is also important to assess if armed groups had access to the capital and if they could recruit there.[766] Ability of armed groups to access crowded and unprotected refugee camps, hosting about 800,000 Liberians, is also important to examine in this context.[767] Therefore, in my analysis of the groups' territory control I identify the actual pool of available populations in those territories. Besides examining armed groups' control of sparsely populated territories of the Liberian interior, I also assess whether the factions had access to refugee and IDP camps, noting the scope of those camps' dwellers.

The ***NPFL*** was known to have the largest territorial access among all five Liberian factions. By March 1990 the armed group controlled up to 90% of Liberian territory with the established presence in 12 out of 13 Liberian counties until 1993-94.[768] The population of those territories under NPFL control, after migration and death toll during the war, was estimated to be around 761,000 people.[769] Calling it a 'Greater Liberia', Charles Taylor established his control there through military and administrative apparatus which included the introduction of a separate governing system and currency. The Greater Liberia, a country within a country, was recognized by many business actors across the world, if not officially by the international diplomatic community.

Later on during the war NPFL's control over its territories was challenged by other factions. For instance, in 1994, the NPFL was deprived of the Lofa and part of the Bong Counties which fell to Ulimo-

[765] "Liberia 1996," Country Report in *World Refugee Survey*, URL: http://www.refugees.org.
[766] The one million figure comes from HRW, "Liberia," in HRW, *World Report*, 1995, p. 114. With the overall pre-war population in Liberia estimated at 2.6 million (Scott, "Liberia," in Cohen, and Deng, eds., *The Forsaken People*, p. 113) and the 800,000 Liberians who escaped abroad as refugees by 1994 (HRW, "Liberia," in HRW, *World Report*, 1995, p. 114), it is conceivable that more than 55% of Liberians who stayed in the country fled to Monrovia.
[767] For the lack of protection of refugee camps with Liberian citizens during the first Liberian war refer to Achvarina and Reich, "No Place to Hide." As one of the informants from my interviews suggested, neither of the Liberian neighboring states was particularly eager to protect refugees as continuation of the conflict in Liberia suited their regional interests well. At the same time, however, access of Liberian armed groups to refugee camps was highly segregated with different factions operating in different host countries.
[768] Kieh, *The First Liberian Civil War*, p. 154.
[769] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), "Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission to Liberia," FAO Report, 3 January 1997, URL: http://www.fao.org/docrep/004/w3902e/w3902e00.htm. The figure of 761,000 was cited in this source for June 1996, prior to the war termination.

K; of the Cape Mount and the Bomi Counties which Ulimo-J annexed; and Grand Bassa, part of Grand Gedeh, part of Maryland, part of Grand Kru, River Cess, and Sinoe which the NPFL lost to the LPC. Nevertheless, despite these considerable losses by 1994, the NPFL remained in control of six counties (or portions of their territories) until the end of the conflict – still more territories than other factions had.[770]

The NPFL forces could also have access to some refugees in the neighboring countries. For example, at the beginning of the insurgency in the Nimba County many of its residents escaped to Ivory Coast and Guinea. The population of these refugees at the beginning of 1990 reached 120,000.[771] Meanwhile, from the accounts of my interviewees it is known that the NPFL rebels walked across the border to the refugee settlements in Ivory Coast to convince people to return to Nimba.[772] Guinea and Sierra Leone, which hosted Liberian refugees, were probably less accessible to the rebels, at least from mid-1992, when Ulimo took over the control of the border between Liberia and Sierra Leone, and after 1994, when Ulimo-K was operating on the territory between Liberia and Guinea.[773]

Overall, with some degree of access to refugees abroad and with the overwhelming control of the Liberian territories, with possible access to about 900,000 people, the NPFL armed group indeed can be assigned as having the value of 'high' on the *territorial access* variable. There is no doubt that if territorial control is a significant predictor of child soldier recruitment, then in the case of Taylor's armed faction the practice indeed should have established itself at a high rate and most likely to a larger degree than in any other group. It is evident from my survey that recruitment of children by the NPFL originated in 11 out of 13 counties that the group controlled.

By 1993, only a year after its formation, the ***LPC*** faction claimed to control six Liberian counties – Sinoe, Grand Bassa, River Cess, and parts of Grand Gedeh, Grand Kru and Maryland.[774] These territories covered the entire southern part of the country and half of Liberian land altogether.[775] The LPC managed to occupy them consistently until the end of the war in 1996, thus controlling the same scope of territory as the NPFL did between 1994 and 1996.[776] Ulimo-K and Ulimo-J controlled only four counties in the north altogether.[777] The INPFL faction had ceased to exist by that time.

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[770] Those territories included Nimba County, part of Bong, part of Maryland, part of Grand Kru, part of Margibi, and part of Grand Gedeh. The LPC was the only faction that also controlled six counties, but never more than that.
[771] Nmoma, "The Civil War and the Refugee Crisis in Liberia," p. 107.
[772] From my interview with a witness of the Liberian First Civil War (Ghana, winter 2008).
[773] For more details on this refer to the relevant part of this section on the Ulimo-K armed group.
[774] HRW, *Human Rights Abuses by the Liberian Peace Council and the Need for International Oversight*. It is possible that the group controlled only parts of Grand Gedeh, Maryland and Grand Kru, without being able to take all the territories of those counties from the NPFL. (The information on Liberian armed groups' territorial control was compiled by me from variety of sources. The table with such data on all Liberian faction from the first civil war is provided in the Appendices).
[775] Please refer to the political map of Liberia in the Appendices.
[776] The NPFL held only Nimba, Bong, and parts of Maryland, Grand Kru, Margibi, and Grand Gedeh.
[777] The four counties that Ulimo-s controlled were Lofa, Cape Mount, Bomi and parts of Bong.

Prior to the war, six of the southern counties under the LPC control hosted about one fifth of all the Liberian population, or approximately 500,000.[778] During the war, however, these territories were largely abandoned, with their cumulative population in mid-1996 being about 200,000, according to the United Nations.[779] The biggest pool of civilians in the southern territories under the LPC control was in the city of Buchanan, the second largest recipient of IDPs in Liberia during the first war. In June 1996 Buchanan held over 68,000 people only in designated shelters.[780] The population of the Grand Bassa County, where Buchanan is located, was recorded in 1996 at approximately 120,000 people, mainly located in the provincial capital.[781]

Meanwhile, the populations of Sinoe, Grand Gedeh, River Cess, Grand Kru, and Maryland were much smaller: 35,000; 10,000; 15,000; 10,000; and 15,000, respectively.[782] Depopulation of these five counties was first attributed to large migrational flows of people in response to the NPFL anti-Krahn campaign. Then, after the LPC's arrival, the non-Krahn tribes were forced by the faction to leave from these southern territories "into the key points held by Ecomog" – in this case primarily Buchanan city where the LPC had a base.[783] With internal access to about 200,000 people, the Boley's group could reach 11% of all Liberian population during the war, or 25% of those civilians who lived elsewhere in the country but the capital of Monrovia.[784] Therefore, access to civilians by the LPC faction on Liberian soil was substantial, both in absolute terms and relative to other armed groups.

Besides widespread access to civilians within the country, the LPC could also enter Liberian refugee camps in Ivory Coast, where fighters rested and mobilized.[785] It is estimated that between 190,000 and 235,000 of Liberians from the four southern counties of Grand Gedeh, Maryland, Grand Kru and Sinoe were residing in Ivory Coast at various stages of the war.[786] Interestingly, the LPC's strong control of the

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[778] FAO, "Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission to Liberia."
[779] Ibid.
[780] DHACVA, *Liberia: Humanitarian Situation Report*, 97/0240, 3 July 1997, Period Covered: 30 June 1997, No. 77, URL: http://iys.cidi.org/humanitarian/hsr/97a/0062.html. http://www.lib.unb.ca/Texts/JCS/bin/get.cgi?directory=SPR97/articles/&filename=nmoma.html. On how the LPC advanced in Liberia from its Buchanan base see Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 102.
[781] FAO, "Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission to Liberia."
[782] Ibid.
[783] Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 102. While moving people into its major stronghold places, the LPC pursued this 'scorched earth' policy in order to empty the countryside and deprive the NPFL of its civilian support, whenever it penetrated to the remote areas of the LPC's control.
[784] Neither of the groups, except the INPFL which was contained to the Caldwell base, was stationed in the capital.
[785] For more detailed description of these incidents refer to the section on mobilization in Chapter 7.
[786] Altogether, Ivory Coast hosted from 250,000 to 300,000 Liberian refugees at any given time during the first Liberian conflict (Nmoma, "The Civil War and the Refugee Crisis in Liberia," pp. 115, 110 http://www.lib.unb.ca/Texts/JCS/bin/get.cgi?directory=SPR97/articles/&filename=nmoma.html). However, about 25% of these refugees were from the Bong and Nimba Counties rather than form the south, which would put an estimate for southern Liberians in the camps of Ivory Coast at about 190,000-235,000 (for distribution of Liberian refugees in Ivory Coast in 1997 by county of origin see Kuhlman, "Responding to Protracted Refugee Situations," p. 13).

Grand Bassa County, on the one hand, allowed the group to have convenient access to the congregated people it forced out of the remaining five counties into the proximity of Buchanan, under its exclusive possession. On the other hand, control of the remaining five counties, albeit depopulated, allowed the LPC access to Ivory Coast all the way from the base in Buchanan through its own territories. In Ivory Coast, meanwhile, the group could benefit from the presence of an abundant refugee population. This example of the LPC group reveals one of the mechanisms behind the territorial control argument: an armed faction with larger access to physical land has more chances to reach to a larger number of people.

In sum, besides controlling six Liberian counties, most of which were depopulated, the LPC ruled in Buchanan, which was the primary host of IDPs, and had access to refugee camps in Ivory Coast. Overall, the group could possibly reach about 500,000 civilians, both in Liberia and abroad in Ivory Coast. Therefore, I argue that LPC's access to territories and people was 'medium high' and therefore the group's propensity to recruit children should be also 'medium high'. According to my survey, children were recruited in three out of the six provinces under the LPC control – those being Grand Bassa, Sinoe, and Grand Gedeh – and from the refugee camps in Ivory Coast. This distribution reflects the demographic characteristics of the LPC territories. Grand Bassa and Sinoe were the first and second largest populated counties of the total six with the LPC control, with about 120,000 people living in Grand Bassa in 1996 and 35,000 residing in Sinoe.[787] Grand Gedeh was largely depopulated as were the counties of Grand Kru, Maryland and Rivercess.

Before the formation of Ulimo's splinter groups Ulimo-K and Ulimo-J, the faction took over western and north-western Liberian territories, including the Lofa and Cape Mount Counties. Thus, from mid-1992 until the Liberian elections in 1997, Ulimo and its subsequent sub-factions controlled the territories along the country's border with Sierra Leone. After the Ulimo split, ***Ulimo-K*** inherited the bases in Guinea and access to its supporters within the refugee camps there. Besides this, the group permanently controlled and operated only in the upper Lofa County. Ulimo-K attacked the Bong County trying to overtake the NPFL's base at Gbarnga, but the area remained mostly under the control of Taylor's forces.

In mid-1996, Lofa's overall population was estimated at 126,000, with upper Lofa hosting roughly a half of this amount – approximately 60,000. At the same time, the Guinean refugee camps, in which Ulimo-K had its unofficial regroupment bases, contained probably a good portion of all 300,000-400,000 Liberian refugees in that country.[788] Overall, Ulimo-K could have access to about 300,000 people on the Liberian and Guinean territories under its control.[789] This is a significant amount of people spread over a

[787] FAO, "Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission to Liberia."
[788] The numbers of Liberian refugees to Guinea varied from 325,000 in 1991 to 400,000 in 1995 (Nmoma, "The Civil War and the Refugee Crisis in Liberia," pp. 110, 117).
[789] It is known, for instance, that all of the 100,000 Mandingo people who fled Liberia to Guinea self-settled among their kin in towns and cities of that country as opposed to living in the refugee camps. For the numbers and ways of

limited geographical space, considering that Ulimo-K itself consisted of only about 9,000 fighters.[790] With large absolute numbers of accessible people, but their lower figures relative to the NPFL or LPC, the value of the *territorial access* variable for Ulimo-K is assigned to be 'medium'. This, in turn, predicts a 'medium' level of *child soldiering* variable.

In 1994, the ***Ulimo-J*** faction established itself firmly in the Bomi County, with its base in Tubmanburg. It also controlled parts of the Grand Cape Mount County and lower Lofa, and had sparse presence in the Margibi County.[791] With access to about 100,000-150,000 people in these counties and to the Sierra Leonean border with about 15,000 Liberian refugees residing there by 1996, as well as part of Guinean 300,000-400,000 refugees prior to Ulimo split, the group had a viable source of civilian pool within reach, in case of higher recruitment needs.[792] In relative terms, however, it had by far the lowest degree of access to people compared to the NPFL or the LPC. Therefore, the *territorial access* variable for Ulimo-J can be assigned the value of 'medium', and so is the prediction on the value of the *child soldiering* variable.

The ***INPFL*** had the least territorial possessions in the Liberian conflict. After performing an expedite launch from the Nimba County to Monrovia city in early 1990, Prince Johnson pooled all of his fighters towards the capital, which the group never controlled. For a short period of time during the summer of 1990, upon its arrival to Monrovia, the INPFL ruled over the city's northern and western parts.[793] However, shortly after the Ecomog deployment in the city in August 1990 and until the INPFL's dissolution in 1992, the armed faction was confined within the capital to a small district of Caldwell.[794] With IDPs, the Greater Monrovia security zone was estimated to host more than a million people during the first Liberian war – that being more than a half of all Liberians who remained in the country during the war.[795] And yet, as I argue below, despite the group's proximity to large numbers of civilians, it is very unlikely that the INPFL had unfettered access to these potential recruits.

Whether the INPFL could actually reach civilians in Monrovia depends on how strictly the faction followed Ecomog orders to contain its fighters to the Caldwell base and on the degree of feasibility of the

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settling of Mandingo refugees from Liberia in Guinea see Wim Van Damme, "How Liberian and Sierra Leonean Refugees Settled in the Forest Region of Guinea (1990-96), *Journal of Refugee Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 1, 1999, p. 42.

[790] See Section 1 of this chapter.

[791] The Bomi, Cape Mount and Margibi Counties, as well as Monrovia, were cited as territories of the Ulimo-J's presence in Scott, "Liberia," p. 111. However, in Monrovia the group, or rather its leadership, was present during a very short period of time, during the peace treaty, and when all other factions were there.

[792] The number of Liberian refugees residing in Sierra Leone comes from "Liberia 1996," Country Report in *World Refugee Survey*.

[793] Duyvesteyn, *Clausewitz and African War*, p. 29.

[794] Seck Alioune, "United Nations Human and Financial Resources for Peacekeeping in Africa," Thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, Montrey, California, defended on June, 1994, URL: http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA284140&Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf, p. 18.

[795] Refer to footnote 700 on p. 171 of this chapter.

INPFL fighters' free movement within the city. It is widely reported that the INPF faction largely cooperated with the Ecomog forces whom it greeted at the Freeport immediately upon their arrival to Monrovia.[796] Besides, it is quite likely that it would be difficult for the INPFL soldiers to violate the terms of containment openly, as Ecomog and the AFL had checkpoints established throughout Monrovia.[797]

Even if the INPFL soldiers operated under cover on the premises of the whole of Monrovia, it is quite unlikely that they could have forcibly mobilized civilians and children in such a way. First, forced recruitment would be hard to conceal in the presence of the AFL and Ecomog soldiers in Monrovia. Second, the level of civilian protection in Monrovia was reasonable, if not in absolute terms, then at least relative to the rest of the country.[798] Displaced people lived in designated places and shelters, which were easy to guard. Monrovians themselves often abandoned their houses and clustered around the areas with AFL/Ecomog presence, including in and around IDP settlements, especially when security in the city deteriorated. For example, during the summer of 1990 in Monrovia "people had resorted to staying together as some areas were considered safer than others."[799] Although the INPFL ceased to exist for years prior to 1996, the following account from that later stage of the war shows that people did regard the military installations of Ecomog, the AFL and other parties to the conflict as more secure points during the violent times in Monrovia:

> "Renewed violence in April [1996] pushed an estimated 300,000 persons from their homes in Monrovia and devastated the morale of many Liberians. Families fled to Monrovia's schools, warehouses, dilapidated government buildings, and to private homes in safer parts of the city. Up to 20,000 fled to a Monrovia military base that subsequently came under attack. Another 20,000 took refuge in the U.S. embassy's residential compound."[800]

Therefore, I would argue that the INPFL did not have unrestricted access to Monrovian civilians as potential recruits, despite the fact that the faction was located so close to this massive hub of people.[801] Therefore, in the case of the INPFL, the access to territories and people can be assigned a value of 'low' which in turn predicts, according to my argument, low levels of child soldiering within the group. It also

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[796] Nass, *A Study in Internal Conflicts*, p. 68.

[797] It is possible, though, that the INPFL fighters could have moved around the city in disguise – a tactic that they used against AFL soldiers during the armed struggle in Monrovia in the beginning of the conflict before the Ecomog's arrival. For one such example consider how the group's fighters used AFL uniforms to capture some of the government soldiers' heavy weapons and refer to Ogunleye, *Behind Rebel Line*, p. 19.

[798] This protection was achieved due to the presence of Ecomog fighters in Monrovia since August 1990 throughout the war. As one source noticed, "Although Ecomog never had explicit humanitarian objectives, it did reduce hostilities and atrocities, and by establishing order in greater Monrovia it set up a safe haven for thousands of displaced Liberians" (HRW, "Liberia," p. 105).

[799] Ogunleye, *Behind Rebel Line*, p. 69.

[800] "Liberia 1996," Country Report in *World Refugee Survey*.

[801] This example demonstrates yet another theoretical point. Using *territorial access* as a proxy for child availability can sometimes outperform the very concept of the presence of civilian population near an armed group. As it can be seen from the INPFL example, proximity to a large number of civilians, and children as a result, does not necessarily lead to their recruitment, as a group might still have no access to those civilians if it lacks control of the very territory where they reside.

suggests that the existing recruitment by the faction of children and adults alike, if performed in disguise, should have been voluntary. Since the INPFL operated under the close supervision of Ecomog, it would have been difficult to smuggle people through the ubiquitous checkpoints prevalent in the capital. The voluntary form of child recruitment for the INPFL is confirmed in the accounts of my interviewees.

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In the above case study analysis I compiled and provided qualitative information to assess the values of my independent variables for the five Liberian armed groups. Now I proceed to compare and contrast these values in terms of their prediction of child soldier recruitment. The results of this comparison are summarized in Table 14 below. The table includes four columns for all independent variables in my argument. Each cell of these four columns contains both the values of the relevant explanatory factor and below it in curly braces the predicted value for the dependent variable of *child soldiering* based on the single value above it. Table 14 also contains a column of predicted child soldier recruitment levels by all five armed groups based on the identified values of the predictive factors. The last column of Table 14 provides the groups' ratios of children to adults found in the data from my fieldwork. As can be seen from the table, the values of the four proposed independent variables predict the categorical values of the dependent variable of child soldier recruitment rather well.

Table 14. Factors Determining Child Soldier Recruitment by Armed Groups

Liberian Armed Faction	***1. Fight Capacity (Intensity)***	***2. Material Capacity (Rewards)***	***3. Ethnic Killings (Defense)***	***4.Territorial Access (People)***	***Child Soldier Predicted***	***Child Soldier Actual***
NPFL	High {HIGH}*	Low {HIGH}	High {HIGH}	High {HIGH}	HIGH	HIGH
LPC	High {HIGH}	Medium {MEDIUM}	High {HIGH}	Medium High {MEDIUM HIGH}	HIGH	HIGH
Ulimo-K	Medium High {MEDIUM HIGH}	Medium {MEDIUM}	Low {LOW}	Medium {MEDIUM}	MEDIUM (High)	MEDIUM HIGH
Ulimo-J	Medium Low {MEDIUM LOW}	High {LOW}	Low {LOW}	Medium {MEDIUM}	(Medium) LOW	MEDIUM LOW
INPFL	Low {LOW}	High {LOW}	Low {LOW}	Low {LOW}	LOW	LOW

* In curly brackets {} I report the predicted value for child soldier recruitment from one specific value of the independent variable reflected in each cell. Column 6 stands for the overall predicted value for child soldier practice based on the analysis of all four predictive values from each explanatory factor.

The NPFL and the LPC factions fall into the high range on the predicted dependent variable by their corresponding independent variables, according to my argument. In both cases the prediction is quite accurate, with the actual values of the dependent variable (presented in the last column) matching the

predictive patterns (presented in the second from the right column). In the case of the INPFL, the most moderate child recruiter out of all five factions, the actual value also closely follows the predictive one.

As to Ulimo-K and Ulimo-J, their predicted values overall reflect the actual situation well, but the precision of such forecasting is not absolute. This effect could occur due to the nature of my data in which the actual values of my dependent as well as some independent variables could be disaggregated to the 4-tier scale of 'low', 'medium low', 'medium high' and 'high'. This, however, was not the case for two independent variables of *material capacity* and *ethnic persecution*, the values of which could be assessed only at the 3-tier ('low', 'medium', and 'high') or 2-tier ('low' and 'high') levels, respectively. Therefore, in the case of Ulimo-K, for example, the potential values of 'medium high' on the *material capacity* and *ethnic persecution* variables could not be distinguished at the current level of their measurement. Similarly, the 'medium low' level for the same variables in the case of Ulimo-J was also more nuanced to be identified by their simpler measurement grid.

The precision of the prediction in case of Ulimo-K and Ulimo-J might also depend on the relative power of the four explanatory factors in my argument. For example, if the factors of *fighting capacity*, *material capacity* and *territorial control* were more important in the case of the Ulimo-J faction than the value of *ethnic persecution*, then the predictive value on child soldiers should be established as 'medium low', which would exactly match the actual value of the dependent variable. In the next chapter I evaluate this difference in the relative importance of four independent variables in my argument, as specified by the groups' different level of popularity. For this purpose I analyze the values of the conditioning variable of *mobilization capacity* from my extended explanatory framework.

Although it is somewhat difficult at this point to determine with absolute precision whether the actual values of child recruitment exactly matched the predicted ones in case of two armed groups of Ulimo-K and Ulimo-J, they indeed reflected the absolute trend without any tendency for outlying patterns. The predicted pattern of the relative child recruitment trend across all five armed groups is closely followed by the actual data. Overall, I conclude, my first cross-group comparative case study analysis supports my explanatory framework to a high degree.

Chapter 7: Case Studies II

Extended Cross-case Comparison*.** In my extended argument I proposed that the four predictive factors of child recruitment practice by armed groups should have different explanatory power depending on whether insurgents are popular or not among the people. More specifically, I suggested that in the case of ***popular armed groups the child recruitment practice should be primarily determined by the *fighting capacity* and *ethnic persecution* variables. For ***unpopular*** armed groups I postulated a larger effect of the *fighting capacity*, *material capacity*, and *territorial access* factors. These two extended propositions were confirmed by my large-*N* analysis. Hereby, as an extension of Case Study I in Chapter 6, I attempt to verify if the distinction between popular and unpopular rebels also affects the role of my explanatory factors in the comparative study of five Liberian armed groups. In Section 1 of this chapter I determine the level of mobilization capacity of these five factions. Then, depending on whether groups' mobilization capacity is high or low, I predict their values on the dependent variable from a restricted number of my explanatory factors. These predicted values are then compared with the actual child soldier practice rates established for the cross-group comparative Case Study I in Chapter 6. I conclude with a discussion of the relative power of my four predictive factors in case of popular and unpopular armed groups.

Temporal Case Study. The second case study in this chapter is a *temporal* one, whereby I examine the child recruitment practice by one Liberian armed faction – the NPFL – over time. More specifically, I identify the absolute numbers of children in my survey sample who reported being recruited by the group in individual years between 1989 and 1996. I then explore if and how the temporal changes in the outcome of the dependent variable are caused by my predictive factors of underage recruitment. For this purpose, I first identify NPFL's temporal variations in the independent variables of *fighting capacity*, *material capacity*, *ethnic persecution* and *territorial access*. I then analyze if and how these factors can be linked to the changes in the dependent variable. Their relative explanatory power is then discussed in the context of changing NPFL's popularity, established by tracing the temporal variance of the *mobilization capacity* variable. I also examine change over time in the control variables of *conflict duration*, *conflict intensity*, and *orphaning*, to see if their effects can be linked to the changing trend in the NPFL's child recruitment. I conclude with the summary of results from the case study analysis.

As has been outlined in Chapter 4 on methodology, by analyzing a single country diachronically I therefore achieve higher comparability of cases, as the values of all my independent variables are observed in one armed group across time. An important benefit of such a comparison in the temporal case study is that it allows me to perform a *process-tracing* analysis. Thus, I strive to establish a causal chain of mechanisms leading from the changed values of my proposed explanatory factors to the changed values of the dependent variable. In other words, besides assessing correlations I attempt to provide evidence to demonstrate that my proposed explanations lead to their effects.

Section 1. Extended Comparative Cross-Case Study

Variance in the Conditioning Factor of Mobilization Capacity

In this section, I offer a detailed evaluation of how Liberian groups in my case study mobilized people for their movements. By examining all five groups simultaneously, I establish the differences in their popularity. In my case study analysis the armed factions' popularity, represented in their capacity to mobilize people for the movement, as well as by expressed public attitudes towards the insurgents, has a more nuanced ordinal measure of 'low', 'medium low', 'medium high' and 'high', as opposed to the binary index utilized for my large-*N* tests.[802] Recall that the *mobilization capacity* variable in my study does not represent the strength of the armed group expressed in its ultimate size measured in numbers of combatants. Rather, it stands for the concept of *popularity* of a group on ideological and non-pecuniary incentives.[803] In my case study analysis two prominent types of ideological mobilization surfaced: ethnic and revolutionary.

I refer to mobilization as ***ethnic*** if I found evidence that the leaders of Liberian armed factions appealed to tribal differences among the people in the country and played the ethnic card to rally supporters. Ethnic mobilization in Liberia represented a mix of national and local tribal politics. On the one hand, the pre-war national government and state army were composed primarily of the non-prevalent Krahn tribe and, as such, were not representative of the country which had 15 other ethnic groups, some of them larger than Krahn. On the other hand, the local geography spurred historical rivalries among a number of tribes whose unsettled grievances intertwined into mobilization politics of most of the five armed factions. As Ellis notes, in the First Liberian Civil War, "in most circumstances this mobilization of ethnic identity was more rhetoric than reality, as every faction included substantial numbers of fighters of diverse ethnic origin, and ethnic allegiance became really important only when a local grievance, rooted in local history and land disputes, became caught up with national factional activity."[804]

Revolutionary *mobilization* in my case study occurred when some factional leaders, mostly of the NPFL and its INPFL splinter group, appealed to their constituencies for a political change in the country. This strategy represented a powerful mechanism for mobilizing masses in the context of the First Liberian Civil War. While Ernesto Che Guevara did denounce the revolutionary spirit among African insurgents, its cultivation in masses during mobilization campaigns of African rebel leaders might not be obsolete, as

[802] Ability of the NPFL to mobilize people was defined as 'medium' in my large-*N* dataset. Ulimo-J and the INPFL were both assigned the 'low' value. However, a closer look in my detailed case study analysis suggests that mobilization capacity of Ulimo-J and the INPFL was, in fact, different. While mobilization of both groups was lower than the one of the NPFL – a fact accounted for in the cross-group dataset – it also differed between the two groups, which was not accounted for by a more general categorization of the variable employed in the large-*N* study.
[803] The scope of people joining an armed group for financial reasons is determined in my analysis by another variable of *material capacity*.
[804] Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 105. Ellis also notes that "in general, ethnic appeals by faction leaders were most successful where circumstances were obliging ordinary civilians to seek military protection."

the Liberian example demonstrates.[805] While most likely not matching in character the ideational movements in Latin America in the times of Che Guevara, some armed groups in Liberia excelled in the populist rhetorical revolutionary appeals to people. Also, the disciplinary codes and practices of some Liberian factions in this regard also stand apart from the most common images of overwhelming brutality and violence of the Liberian conflict.

National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL)

The NPFL armed group began its initial campaign of mobilizing people on ideological grounds very successfully. When the group's leader Charles Taylor first entered Liberia in December 1989 from Ivory Coast with a handful of international revolutionary soldiers, he quickly obtained voluntary support from many citizens of the Nimba County. This NPFL mobilization success came as a result of the group leaders' ability to play the ethnic card in raising the impoverished and abused tribal groups of Gio and Mano to fight against the Krahn government of President Doe. The Nimba County, a home to Gio and Mano, was chosen strategically by the NPFL as the first point of entry into Liberia and a platform for launching further attacks. This is because the region "had been the epicenter of opposition to the Doe government since the early 1980s, originally because Doe's main rival in those days, Thomas Quiwonkpa, was a son of Nimba."[806]

While discontent in the Nimba County with the exclusion of Gio and Mano from state power and allocation of resources was at a boiling point, and the sympathy for the rebellion cause was evident, the ignition spark for massive mobilization was yet to come. The Doe government had planted the seeds by its own miscalculated policy in the region. After the first news of insurgency in the north-east of the country reached the capital, the administration ordered detentions of Gio and Mano suspects in Monrovia and Nimba and urged Liberian citizens "to take up their bows, arrows, machetes and local guns and jump into the bush in search of the rebels."[807] A call by the information minister at that time, Alhaji Kromah, to the Mandingo people suggesting that they should pick up arms to defend and finance the government

[805] This example refers to Guevara's travel with 100 Cuban fighters to eastern Congo in 1965 to help organize and fight the rebel movement against Western Imperialism in Africa (This example is taken from Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion*, p. 33). Apparently, Guevara went on this mission while seeking a potential for ideational movement. However, his effort "to mold Congolese fighters in the image of Cuban revolutionaries was a disaster" and he "departed after less than a year" (Ibid., p. 33). Guevara explained this unsuccessful attempt by the failure of the rebellion "to select "revolutionaries" to fight," which ultimately led to the combatants' "drinking and looting" rather than facing "the risky proposition of launching guerrilla attack" (Ibid., pp. 33-34). As he recalled: "It was a lottery whether or not you would find [among the recruits] any revolutionaries…. They had a very high opinion of themselves, a very highly developed concept of the personal obligation to take care of cadres [themselves] and the idea that the revolution owed them a lot" (Ibid., pp. 33-34).

[806] Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 113.

[807] Ogunleye, *Behind Rebel Line*, p. 18. For more details on the events occurring in Liberian conflict during this stage of conflict refer to Harris, "From 'Warlord' to 'Democratic' President," p. 434.

"may also have worked to Taylor's advantage."[808] Partially due to this proclamation, the Mandingo ethnic group, renowned for its business and trade occupations, quickly became a lucrative 'enemy tribe' target for the NPFL fighters.

All this helped Taylor, "an Americo-Liberian with little connection to the hinterland,"[809] to use the ethnic appeal in intensifying mobilization of people for his movement. Here is how it worked in practice, according to Ellis:

> "NPFL messengers traveled through the rural areas announcing that the NPFL was coming, and that its enemies were Krahn and Mandingo and supporters of the government. Hatred for the Doe government and those associated with it ran so deep in Nimba County that all the NPFL guerrillas had to do was distribute arms… 'As the NPFL came in', Charles Taylor recalled, 'we didn't even have to act. People came to us and said: "Give me a gun. How can I kill the man who killed my mother?"[810]

In other words, "Gio citizens of Nimba in particular were joining the NPFL in large numbers" at first to attack local Krahn, "whom they regarded […] as collectively responsible for the brutality of Doe," and then local Mandingo, who were "profiting from Doe's rule" and "acquiring land in Nimba, where they were not considered to have hereditary rights."[811]

As Taylor's fighters marched from the Nimba County to the country's capital of Monrovia, other tribes also sided with the armed group. For instance, in the Grand Gedeh County, where the NPFL first arrived in 1990, people of the Grebo tribe were reported to be joining the rebel organization "because they had long resented the fact that the government of the County was dominated by Krahn."[812] To seek popular support from Gola – a large ethnic group in Liberia – Taylor changed his middle name in 1991 from Macarthur to Ghankay to proclaim himself as Gola.[813] The Kpelle tribe was also said to support Taylor during the war.[814] Current studies disagree on whether the motives of Kpelle were based on historical ethnic grievances with Mandingo or antagonism towards Krahn. In any case, the NPFL was found to have disproportionately higher number of Kpelle soldiers in its ranks, according to one recent survey of Liberian ex-combatants.[815] The same study also revealed that the Bassa tribe was also overrepresented in Taylor's forces.[816]

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[808] Harris, "From 'Warlord' to 'Democratic' President," p. 434.
[809] Ibid., p. 434.
[810] For more details on this see Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, pp. 78-79.
[811] Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 78.
[812] Ibid., p. 129.
[813] Harris, "From 'Warlord' to 'Democratic' President," p. 446; Ogunleye, *Behind Rebel Line*, p. 21. The pre-war population of the Gola tribe in Liberia was 118,000, which made it the eighth largest ethnic group in the country (out of the 15 existing ethnic groups in the country).
[814] Kuhlman, "Responding To Protracted Refugee Situations," p. 9.
[815] Morten Bøås and Anne Hatløy, "'Getting In, Getting Out': Militia Membership And Prospects

Besides Gio, Mano, Kpelle, and Bassa, other tribal groups were reported to mobilize for the NPFL eagerly on the basis of their own historical ideological rivalries. The siding of Kru with the NPFL in the Sinoe County was related to the mobilization in that region of their rival Sapo ethnic group for the rival LPC faction in 1993-94.[817] While the literature on the Liberian conflict supports this fact, the existing studies disagree about which tribe took arms first to fight against the other. *The Perspective*, for instance, suggests that Kru became NPFL supporters after the LPC invaded their County of Sinoe in 1994 and after the group's soldiers, primarily of the Sapo ethnic origin, were using wasteland tactics against the Kru settlements.[818] However, in Ellis's opinion, Sapo were joining the LPC in 1993 in response to hostile actions of the Kru people who enlisted in the NPFL prior to the LPC's arrival.[819] No matter which tribe joined respective military organization first, it is clear that both sided with opposing factions at a certain time of armed hostilities during the First Liberian Civil War, and one of them was mobilizing for the NPFL – the armed group in question. The Loma people also ended up siding indirectly with the NPFL when in 1994 they organized the LDF militia to defend themselves and fight against Mandingo of Ulimo-K armed group.[820]

In addition to its ethnic appeals to people, the NPFL leadership used yet another classical revolutionary mobilization method when it made an ideological call for overthrowing the corrupt government of Doe. To highlight this point, Taylor made his fighters call themselves "freedom fighters." For some people, therefore, irrespective of their tribal origin, the movement appeared revolutionary and was popular on such grounds as well. Consider the following account of one former Liberian child soldier who commented on the NPFL arrival to the town of Bong Mines: "In 1989 I heard of the NPFL as "freedom fighters," but did not know the true reason; some people greeted them from distance."[821] The

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For Re-Integration In Post-War Liberia," *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 46, 1 (2008), pp. 33–55, p. 41. Bøås and Hatløy suggest that the motifs of Kpelle were based on historical ethnic grievances with the Mandingo tribe, whereas Kuhlman claims that it was due to the former's antagonism towards Krahn.

[816] Bøås and Hatløy, "'Getting In, Getting Out '," p. 41. There is no explanation that I could find for why the Bassa tribe was joining or was conscripted by the NPFL *en masse*.

[817] "The Liberian Democratic Future Speaks on Issues of the Day," *The Perspective*; and Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 129.

[818] "The Liberian Democratic Future Speaks on Issues of the Day," *The Perspective*. Whereas the primary goal of the LPC's earth scorching policy in the south of the country was to deprive the NPFL faction of its supportive civilian base, it cannot be concluded that it were the Kru people who supported Taylor prior to 1994.

[819] Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 129. *The Perspective* and Stephen Ellis also provide different dates of the LPC's arrival to the Sinoe County – these being 1994 and 1993, respectively.

[820] For more details refer to the section on ethnic persecution of the previous Chapter 6 and to the text on Ulimo-K's mobilization in this section. In short, "older differences between the local Kpelle and Loma farmers and the Mandingo whom they perceived as interpopers on their territory became institutionalized in the contest between the Mandingo-run Ulimo-K and the LDF [Lofa Defense Force], the latter drawing its support largely from Loma and Kpelle refugees in Guinea" (Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 105).

[821] From my interview with a former Liberian child soldier (Ghana, winter 2008).

revolutionary feelings among Monrovian residents towards the NPFL, fighting for the capital in the summer of 1990, were also evident at that time, as the following witness account suggests:

> "Amidst such heavy bombardments, most residents did not see Taylor as a threat, rather as a Messiah coming to liberate them from Doe's reign of terror. General opinion then was highly in favour of Taylor, with exception of those of Krahn and Mandingo tribes. The youths were anxiously waiting for their areas to fall to the rebels so that they could take up arms and be counted as part of the popular revolution. Those who did not succeed in crossing to the rebel side, the so-called "Liberated Zone," waited patiently in their house hoping that one day the rebels would over-run them."[822]

As one of my interviewees put it, he liked Taylor because the latter "wanted to change the country by developing it and getting access to resources. Before the government had it, people did not get resources, no education."[823] The outlined revolutionary spirit among the people and fighters alike could also be based on the NPFL's seemingly high prospects in 1990 to win the decisive battle for Monrovia against the AFL fighters. The possibility of fast victory indeed made the ideological promises of Charles Taylor look more credible, as his access to the state apparatus and its redistribution mechanisms was imminent.

It all changed rather quickly, though. The first unsuccessful battle of Monrovia in the summer of 1990 resulted in the loss of Taylor's credibility and deterioration of the 'freedom fighters' image, as they embarked on the first looting campaign in the capital. The abuse of civilians of all tribes by the NPFL in Monrovia during this time was widely recorded. The most gruesome instances were reported for the infamous NPFL checkpoints along the roads from the capital to the faction's bases in Kakata, Gbarnga, and Buchanan. It is from that time onwards that the popularity of the movement started steadily decreasing. For people who initially opposed the Doe government and aimed for political change, joining the NPFL armed group now meant participating in two uneasy tasks: torturing and killing civilians on a daily basis and risking their lives while fighting in the heavy battles for Monrovia against the cumulative forces of the AFL, the INPFL, and Ecomog.

Abatement of the revolutionary appeal was not the only downside for the NPFL's popularity. Thus, newly appearing military and political figures in the conflict who also claimed solid ethnic links to Nimba County and enjoyed popularity among Gio and Mano people – the primary support base of Taylor in the initial stages of the war. For example, Prince Johnson, the military leader of the NPFL's splinter INPFL group, was originally from the Nimba County. This ensured popular support for him among his Gio tribe – a fact that could have created pores in the NPFL's supporting pool in Nimba after Johnson proclaimed

[822] Ogunleye, *Behind Rebel Line*, p. 39. Bayo Ogunleye, a Nigerian teacher, was trapped in the first Liberian conflict.

[823] The most surprising thing about this particular account is that this informant was from the Krahn tribe, associated with the President Doe, and his family was not poor on Liberian standards, as his father was reported to work as a medical worker prior to the war and his mother was a trader (From my interviews in Ghana, winter 2008).

his faction's independence from Taylor some time between February and July 1990.[824] The scope of Taylor's followers from the Nimba County could have also decreased after Jackson Doe, a prominent political figure in Monrovia who also enjoyed popular support in Nimba, was assassinated on Taylor's orders sometime before August 1990.[825] This act of violence cost Taylor a number of votes during the 1997 elections, as Harris argues: "Allegations, such as those from the family of Jackson Doe, still popular amongst the Gio and Mano, that Taylor was responsible for his murder… could have been damaging."[826]

Whether the NPFL's popular support in the Nimba County was seriously diverted by the INPFL splinter group and damaged because of the assassination of Jackson Doe remains unknown. It is possible that Prince Johnson, and perhaps more so Jackson Doe, represented the cosmopolitan Gio and Mano, the ones who migrated from the Nimba County to Monrovia some time prior to the war. Meanwhile, the Gio and Mano people who resided in the rural Nimba County gave their hearts and minds to Taylor and his military organization. Consider the following incident which occurred in Monrovia in 1994:

> "When he [Issac Musa – the NPFL battlefront commander representing Charles Taylor in the capital at a certain point of time] arrived in Monrovia to take up his political position, he, a Gio, publicly 'expressed outrage and consternation at the ambivalent manner' with which the citizens of Nimba in Monrovia treated him when they expressed disapproval of his faction. He made speeches in which he stressed that continued division between the people of Nimba and Monrovia could only widen the gap and make reconciliation difficult. This was a clear attempt to use the moral codes of Nimba village life, based on the solidarity of kinship and neighborhood, in the service of national politics, as has become usual in Liberian politics over many years."[827]

This episode demonstrates how the difference between Gio in the capital and the countryside was cultivated by the NPFL itself. It is difficult to establish why Issac Musa would stress this schism at the expense of not converting Gio people in the capital to the rebels' side, unless this ethnic group's support in Monrovia was already mobilized by rival faction of the INPFL and politicians such as Jackson Doe.

Despite the varying degree of the NPFL's popularity across time and geography, be it on ethnic or revolutionary grounds, overall it can be said that the group did attract a significant amount of ideological support. Moreover, it can be argued that relative to other armed factions in Liberia the NPFL's mobilization campaign and capacity were notorious. In addition to the examples above, consider that besides combatants, Taylor presided over a full range of officials in the Greater Liberia zone during 1990-94, upon which he enjoyed the support of technocrats and people under their administrative rule, throughout the war.[828] The culmination point of popular support for Taylor was evident in the ultimate elections in Liberia in 1997, where the NPFL leader won against all political competitors. "Far from being

[824] For Johnson's tribal affiliation see Young, "Costly Discrimination and Ethnic Conflict," p. 7.
[825] For more details on this incident see Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 85.
[826] Harris, "From 'Warlord' to 'Democratic' President," p. 446.
[827] Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 140.
[828] Ibid., p. 135.

a brutal warlord," he "was seen by many Liberians as the liberator of Liberia from the undoubtedly violent, predatory and deeply unpopular regime of Samuel Doe."[829]

Of course, many soldiers of the NPFL were also known to join the faction for short-term material gains from loot and rebels' control of natural and other country's resources. Other reasons such as an attempt to avoid the dire circumstances of war -- hunger and fear of abuse and irrational killing – could have also played their role, along with forced recruitment. What appears important, however, is that ideological motives, more ethnic rather than revolutionary, featured among the reasons given by people for joining the NPFL faction. In relative terms, compared to other armed factions, the NPFL can be regarded as the most popular and thus should be assigned the value of 'high' on the variable of *mobilization capacity*.

Liberia Peace Council (LPC)

Mobilization campaign of the LPC faction was also based on ethnic politcs, but with defensive ideological logic embedded in the motives of recruits. The group was mobilizing fighters along ethnic lines, counting on the Krahn and Sapo populations originating from the Grand Gedeh and Sinoe Counties, which were under the NPFL control until the LPC's arrival in 1993-94. In fact, the whole purpose of creating the LPC in the first place was, at least in rhetoric, to free the Grand Gedeh County and its Krahn people from the NPFL. George Boley, a former Ulimo member, organized the LPC arguably "because the Mandingos [in ULIMO] weren't going to spill blood to liberate Grand Gedeh."[830] According to Boley himself, "the LPC was formed because of "continued acts of atrocities by the NPFL in southeastern Liberia" since the Cotonou agreement."[831]

The actual mobilization of the Grand Gedeh's Krahn people, however, must have occurred elsewhere but in the County itself. This is because at the time of the NPFL control of the Grand Gedeh its territory was "decimated," as more than 100,000 Krahn out of the 102,810 pre-war county population fled as refugees to Ivory Coast.[832] George Boley meanwhile adimtted that "most of his fighters were refugees from the Ivory Coast," presumably of Krahn origin, "who had been forced to flee from the NPFL."[833] Although the numbers cited above virtually exclude the possibility of any presence of the Krahn people in Grand Gedeh during its occupation by the NPFL, some of this ethnic group's communities were scattered in the County as they either decided not to migrate or simply got trapped in the war during their attempt to escape. Most of these people were hiding in the bush on their own. As one of my interviewees reported, he was on the run across the whole Grand Gedeh for three years, at first with his family and then with

[829] Harris, "From 'Warlord' to 'Democratic' President," p. 447.
[830] HRW, *Human Rights Abuses by the Liberian Peace Council and the Need for International Oversight*.
[831] Ibid.
[832] "The Liberian Democratic Future Speaks on Issues of the Day," *The Perspective*.
[833] HRW, *Human Rights Abuses by the Liberian Peace Council and the Need for International Oversight.*

community members after his parents' death, until the LPC arrived. He joined the group's ranks to end his migratory existence. For people like this informant it was either die or pick up a weapon for protection and defense in an effort to drive the NPFL forces out of the Grand Gedeh land.

Fighting for the LPC could bring a resurrection of Krahn to the country's power and as such must have been appealing to the Krahn people. One of my interviewees, recruited in Grand Gedeh, commented on the popularity of the LPC there precisely for that reason. Another ex-child soldier admitted that, although he was forcibly conscripted by the LPC, after a short stay with the group he started to like the ideological goals of the movement. That same person was later captured by the NPFL during a battle, but managed to escape and cross back to the LPC to continue to fight against Taylor's forces.

The support of the Sapo tribe for the LPC was raised in the Sinoe County, where the faction arrived in 1993-94. As mentioned earlier in the text, many Sapo people joined the LPC "enthusiastically so as to take revenge on their Kru neighbors, whom they accused of having earlier joined the NPFL to attack them and loot their property."[834] Support of Sapo for the LPC was significant relative to other tribes, and the group "was estimated to be some seventy percent composed of Sapo" towards the end of the war.[835] Overall, the facts suggest that the LPC had large ideological support in the south-eastern Liberia where the faction operated between 1993 and 1996. The mobilization capacity of the LPC and its popularity are, therefore, assessed at being 'high'.

United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy (Ulimo): Ulimo-K and Ulimo-J Factions

Ulimo-K and Ulimo-J initially started as two different dissident movements uniting as the ***Ulimo*** armed group to fight against the NPFL.[836] They both pursued the same goal of defeating Taylor's forces "to pave the road for the safe return of Mandingos to Liberia by preventing the NPFL from taking over the power in the country."[837] The difference in mobilization trends among the two wings of the same movement was evident from the very onset of Ulimo. One of its branches and the predecessor of the Ulimo-K faction was the organization called 'Movement for the Redemption of Muslims' (MRM). It was formed in February 1991 in Guinea among Mandingo refugees under the leadership of Alhaji Kromah, a former journalist and Liberian information minister. Through active propaganda and emphasis on his Muslim religion, Kromah hoped to rally the support of Mandingo refugees and the Guinean state, as well as obtain financial assistance from the Middle East. Despite his efforts, Kromah and his organization

[834] Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 129. The LPC occupied Greenville – the provincial capital of the Sinoe County – in 1993, when it first came to existence. For a larger discussion of the historical grievances between Sapo and Kru, as well as for the debate in the literature about who initiated the militarized antagonism between the two ethnic groups in the First Liberian Civil War, refer to this chapter's sub-section elaborating on the NPFL's mobilization campaign in the Sinoe County.
[835] Ibid., p. 129.
[836] The group's split along the ethnic lines, as well as the specific mobilization trends at the beginning of its formation, necessitate a historical comparison of two organizations which constituted Ulimo at first.
[837] This discussion of Ulimo formation is based on Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, pp. 94-95.

attracted only a few fighters, as most Liberian exiles, including many Mandingo from Guinea, preferred to join yet another organization called 'Liberian United Defense Force' (LUDF). The latter was led by General Albert Karpeh and formed in 1991 in Sierra Leone.

The popularity of Karpeh's LUDF may have been achieved due to the professional military image of the group which included former soldiers from the Doe army with extensive experience. Karpeh himself was formerly a US-trained special forces officer and a minister of Defense in Liberia, as well as Doe's last Ambassador to Sierra Leone. From Sierra Leonean refugee camps Karpeh mobilized many former AFL veterans, mostly of Krahn origin, who formed the core professional fighters of the group. The authoritative military leadership and experienced soldiers of the LUDF, in turn, attracted many civilian Krahn and Mandingo refugees. The former, residing primarily in Sierra Leonean camps, and the latter, who lived in both Sierra Leonean and Guinean refugee settlements (and walked from Guinea to Sierra Leone to join Karpeh as opposed to Kromah in Guinea), were eagerly joining the forces of LUDF. Their primary motive was purely ideological – to win back land and power in Liberia from which they were expelled.

Many Krahn in Sierra Leone hailed from their homeland in the Grand Gedeh County, where the NPFL was killing their tribe since early 1990. Others fled Monrovia on the eve of NPFL's imminent attack on the city in the summer of 1990, preceding Ecomog's arrival. Mandingo refugees came mainly from the Nimba and Lofa Counties. Nimba was the first Liberian territory where Mandingo suffered documented looting and extinction by the NPFL.[838] The first attack of Taylor's forces on the Lofa County later on in July 1990 "culminated in a major massacre of the Mandingo at the town of Bakedu, an old commercial center on a trade route from the coast to the savannah, controlled by the Malinke and Mandingo traders."[839]

In May 1991, the LUDF and the MRM formed an alliance, "giving birth to the United Liberation Movement of Liberia (ULIMO)."[840] Ulimo became active by fighting against the RUF with Sierra Leonean government and Nigerian forces in an attempt to undermine Taylor's proxy abroad and obtain support of the Sierra Leonean government for its future anti-NPFL campaign. By September 1991, Ulimo reentered Liberia and fought the NPFL on Liberian land until, due to "political, commercial, and military rivalry," it split into two sub-factions in April 1994.[841] Ulimo-K was commanded by Kromah and

[838] For these accounts refer to Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 114.
[839] Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 128.
[840] This discussion of Ulimo's operations is based on Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, pp. 95-96.
[841] Ulimo's split was probably long overdue. Throughout the group's existence, Kromah was using media to advance himself and trying to convert people within Ulimo towards his military wing. Then there was the assassination of Karpeh on June 1, 1992 on Kromah's order. And, ultimately, it was the inability to delineate the rights to lucrative diamond and timber resources between the two wings that facilitated the split of the group.

predominantly consisted of Mandingo supporters from the Ulimo group, whereas Krahn-dominated Ulimo-J was led by Roosevelt Johnson.[842]

Despite the existence of the cumulative force of Ulimo, it can be argued that the faction was divided along the MRM and LUDF lines throughout its existence. Besides isolated leadership, these military wings seemed to be operating separately, each conquering respective territories, having their own alliances with Ecomog, and paving their own way to the acquisition of Liberian natural resources.[843] From the point in time when the group split, the popularity of its two sub-factions of Ulimo-J and Ulimo-K should be evaluated from the perspective of mobilization of people in Liberia from 1994 and historical recruitment of people since 1991 for Ulimo's wings from refugee camps of Sierra Leone and Guinea

By 1994, ***Ulimo-K*** was established in Liberia in the upper Lofa County and parts of Bong, where it was fighting the NPFL and defending its newly acquired territories. Both counties were regarded as hostile to the Ulimo-K fighters. Mandingo soldiers of Ulimo-K were former civilians expelled from the Lofa County by the Loma and Kpelle people with the help of the NPFL.[844] Thus, once in Lofa, Ulimo-K retaliated with violent acts of looting and plundering the local communities, leading in 1993 to Loma and Kpelle joining the LDF militia "established in refugee camps in Guinea with the primary aim of hitting back at the hated Ulimo-K."[845] In Lofa "the LDF fighters had the full support of the communities on whose behalf they were fighting, turning the war in the upper Lofa areas into an ethnic contest between Mandingo on the one side, and Loma and Kpelle on the other."[846]

The territories of the Bong County, to which Ulimo-K had access at some point, were no less hostile to the predominantly Mandingo soldiers of the faction. In fact, the Bong County was considered to be the NPFL home base land where the capital and the military base of Taylor's Greater Liberia were established in the town of Gbarnga. It was the center of an artificial government where officials were all intertwined into Taylor's network of material resource extraction and where the population, as a result, was dependent on this new 'administration'. Therefore, it is hard to imagine that Ulimo-K could have mobilized a lot of popular support in the Bong County.

In the Cape Mount County, which Ulimo-K did not control for too long, mobilization must have also been low. Consider how civilians of Cape Mount were reported to suffer at the hands of Ulimo-K, which presupposes low popularity for the movement in that region:

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[842] Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 137.
[843] For instance, "By September 1991 the LUDF wing of Ulimo re-entered Liberia… and was getting support from… contingents of Ecomog" (Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 95). In August 1992, the MRM wing of Ulimo with support of Ecomog (who also bought some NPFL commanders in Lofa) entered Lofa and started taking valuable agricultural and timber lands of the County from Taylor (Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 98).
[844] For more information on this historical ethnic tensions see Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 128.
[845] Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 105.
[846] Ibid., p. 105.

> "In late February [1995], ULIMO-Mandingo fighters killed 27 persons in Gbarma, Grand Cape Mount, and burned to the ground the neighboring villages of Tarkpoima and Zuo… ULIMO-Mandingo fighters killed hundreds of civilians in Menkor Town, Grand Cape Mount, and abducted many others, whose fate is unknown… ULIMO-Mandingo fighters entered Kpeneji town in Grand Cape Mount on April 4, killing three civilians and setting the town afire, including a large refugee/displaced persons camp… Mandingo forces murdered 55 civilians in Guthrie in late April."[847]

Overall, with its initially low mobilization as the MRM movement in Guinea, and its operation in hostile territories, Ulimo-K is assigned the value of 'medium low' on the *mobilization capacity* variable.

After the 1994 Ulimo split, ***Ulimo-J*** established itself in the Bomi County and was present in the Cape Mount and lower parts of the Lofa County. Not much is known about mobilization for Ulimo-J on Bomi and Lofa land. But, unlike in the case of Ulimo-K, those territories were not hostile to the group and, therefore, some mobilization could have occurred, especially if communities suffered under the NPFL rule prior to the arrival of the Roosevelt Johnson's forces. The Cape Mount County was taken by Ulimo-J after the Ulimo-K fighters had to abandon it.

Ulimo-J's leader, General Roosevelt Johnson, was originally from the town of Tchien in the Zwedru district of the Grand Gedeh County, and, therefore, could garner the support of the Krahn people of his home county.[848] Many of the Krahn members in Ulimo-J joined the faction directly from the AFL forces.[849] In general, it seems that Krahn people were mobilizing for the armed movement quite well. This is illustrated by the following account: "Krahn's armed power exceeded their numerical strength: they constituted only 4 percent of the population and therefore feared for their survival."[850] Taking into consideration Ulimo-J's overwhelming initial support among refugees in Sierra Leone, and later the confirmed mobilization on the Liberian territories, albeit of an unknown scope, the overall popularity of Ulimo-J can be assigned a value of 'medium high'.

Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL)

The popularity of the ***INPFL*** is somewhat difficult to assess compared to other Liberian factions. The group began in the same manner as the NPFL, advertising itself as a revolutionary movement and playing the ethnic card against Kranh and Mandingo. Unlike the NPFL, however, it was not stationed in the ethnic hub of its primary supporters – Gio and Mano ethnic groups residing in Nimba. In February 1990, just two months after the NPFL came to the Nimba County from Ivory Coast, Prince Johnson of the INPFL was already marching small numbers of his troops to the capital. With such speedy developments within the group, there was simply no time for a coherent mobilization campaign. It is likely that the INPFL leadership was not contemplating any serious cultivation of supporters in the first place, as it planned to

[847] U.S. Department of State, *Liberia: Human Rights Practices, 1995*.
[848] Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 137.
[849] Howe, *Ambiguous Order*, p. 141.
[850] Ibid., p. 141.

stage a coup-like military ousting of the Doe government in Monrovia. To achieve that goal, the INPFL was building its outstanding military capability on the basis of just a small number of highly professional fighters, including international mercenaries. Overall, therefore, the INPFL's popularity and the variable of *mobilization capacity* for the group can be assigned a 'low' value.

Explanatory Power of the Proposed Factors for Popular and Unpopular Armed Groups

Table 15 below summarizes the values of the *mobilization capacity* variable assessed in this section for each Liberian armed group in my case study. Consequently, with the different levels of popularity of these factions, their probability and scope of recruiting children should be determined by different explanatory factors, according to my extended argument. More specifically, as Table 15 reflects, for the factions with high mobilization capacity, such as the NPFL, LPC, and Ulimo-J, the child recruitment practice should be predicted by the groups' *fighting capacity* and *ethnic persecution* variables. For the factions with low mobilization capacity, namely Ulimo-K and the INPFL, child soldier practice should be determined by the levels of *fighting capacity*, *material capacity*, and *territorial access*.

Table 15. Armed Groups Popularity and Factors Explaining their Child Soldier Recruitment

Popularity	***Armed Faction***	***Mobilization Capacity***	***Factors Explaining Child Recruitment***	***Actual Child Soldier Recruitment***
Popular	***NPFl***	High	*Fighting Capacity* *Ethnic Persecution*	High
	LPC	High		High
	Ulimo-J	Medium High		Medium low
Unpopular	***Ulimo-K***	Medium Low	*Fighting Capacity* *Material Capacity* *Territory Control*	Medium high
	INPFL	Low		Low

As can be seen from Table 15, five Liberian armed groups from my case study vary on the dependent variable of *child recruitment* not only across all five of them, but also within the two sub-groups of those with high and low mobilization capacity. Thus, the NPFL, LPC and Ulimo-J, which were highly popular among their constituencies, had 'high' and 'medium low' rates of child recruitment. Similarly, Ulimo-K and the INPFL, while having lower mobilization capacity, varied in their child soldier rates from 'medium high' to 'low' levels, respectively. Therefore, from the methodological point of view, the case study of five Liberian armed groups offers a unique setup to test my extended argument. More specifically, it provides the opportunity to determine whether the two respective sets of independent variables for each of the two categories of popular and unpopular armed groups are able to predict the established differences in child soldier practice within each category.

Table 16 presented below is an updated version of Table 14 from Chapter 6. Unlike Table 14, however, certain cells of Table 16 with values of the independent variables are marked with shading for exclusion. More specifically, the cells for the *material capacity* and *territorial access* variables are shaded in the case of the NPFL, LPC and Ulimo-J. This reflects the fact that these two explanatory factors are not

proposed in my extended argument to explain the variation in child recruitment practice for popular armed groups.[851] As can be seen from Table 16, the two remaining variables of *fighting capacity* and *ethnic persecution* offer a good prediction for child recruitment outcome, as the last columns of predicted and actual values of the dependent variable match very well. More specifically, 'high' levels of the NPFL and LPC's fighting capacity and their access to ethnically persecuted populations predict high levels of child recruitment for these two groups – a trend which did materialize in this case. Similarly, 'medium low' levels of fighting capacity of Ulimo-J and the absence of direct ethnic persecution for its constituency should have incurred 'low' or 'medium low' levels of *child soldiering*, which also matched with reality.

Table 16. Factors Determining Child Soldier Recruitment by Armed Groups

Liberian Armed Faction	*1. Fight Capacity (Intensity)*	*2. Material Capacity (Rewards)*	*3. Ethnic Killings (Defense)*	*4.Territorial Access (People)*	*Child Soldier Predicted*	*Child Soldier Actual*
NPFL	High {HIGH}*	Low {HIGH}	High {HIGH}	High {HIGH}	HIGH	HIGH
LPC	High {HIGH}	Medium {MEDIUM}	High {HIGH}	Medium High {MEDIUM HIGH}	HIGH	HIGH
Ulimo-J	Medium Low {MEDIUM LOW}	High {LOW}	Low {LOW}	Medium {MEDIUM}	(Medium) LOW	MEDIUM LOW
Ulimo-K	Medium High {MEDIUM HIGH}	Medium {MEDIUM}	Low {LOW}	Medium {MEDIUM}	MEDIUM (High)	MEDIUM HIGH
INPFL	Low {LOW}	High {LOW}	Low {LOW}	Low {LOW}	LOW	LOW

* In curly brackets {} I report the predicted value for child soldier recruitment from one specific value of the independent variable reflected in each cell. The penultimate column stands for the overall predicted value of child soldier practice based on the analysis of all four predictive values from each explanatory factor.

For two unpopular armed groups of Ulimo-K and the INPFL, the combination of the three factors, after the exclusion of the variable of *ethnic persecution,* also predicts child recruitment accurately. We witness the 'medium high' levels of child soldiering in the case of Ulimo-K, whose *fighting capacity* was assessed at that same level and whose variable of *material capacity* took the value of 'medium' on a 3-tier scale ('low', 'medium', and 'high'). The low levels of all three independent variables for the INPFL group predict very well the 'low' levels of the dependent variable.

It should be noted here that for the popular NPFL, LPC and Ulimo-J, the excluded variables of *material capacity* and *territorial access* in most cases would have generated different predictions for child

[851] As has been noted earlier in Chapter 3 on the explanatory framework, in the case of *popular* armed groups, material compensation is less likely to establish itself, as insurgents might have difficulty to have both compensated and non-compensated soldiers in their ranks at the same time. As to the territorial access, in the case of *popular* armed groups, a certain number of children are always willing to join and walk towards the groups for either ideological reasons or feelings of insecurity.

soldier recruitment than the included combination of *fighting capacity* and *ethnic persecution* factors. Moreover, *material capacity* and *territorial access* would not have been able to explain the lack of variation across child soldier practice by two out of the three armed groups in question. Thus, the values of 'high', 'medium', and 'low' of the *material capacity* variable for the NPFL, LPC, and Ulimo-J, respectively, do not suggest why the NPFL and the LPC both had 'high' child to adult ratios. Similarly, 'high', 'medium high', and 'medium' levels of the *territorial access* variable do not reflect the absence of any difference in the child soldier values for the NPFL and the LPC.

In the case of the unpopular Ulimo-K and the INPFL armed groups, the exclusion of the *ethnic persecution* variable also offers a more meaningful prediction of the difference in child soldier ratios between the two factions. With its values of 'low' for both Ulimo-K and the INPFL, this explanatory factor cannot predict the difference between the 'medium high' and 'low' values of the dependent variable for these two armed groups. Therefore, the exclusion of the variables that were proposed to be less important in explaining child soldier recruitment in the case of popular and unpopular armed groups appears empirically justified.

Narrative Reconstruction of the Argument for Five Liberian Factions

While Table 16 presents the results of my extended explanatory framework applied to the case study analysis, further insights may be gained by tracing or "unpacking" the whole argument for each of the five Liberian armed groups in question. Once the popularity levels of these factions were established in this section, it is possible to offer short narrative stories of how exactly the groups' popularity and different combinations of explanatory factors interacted.

The ***NPFL***, highly popular relative to all other factions, had also established itself as the most militarily effective armed group with high fighting capacity and thus high demand for additional recruits. Its large popularity could have filled the necessary ranks for the group. Therefore, child recruits in the armed faction could be driven by extremely insecure environments in the regions where the NPFL operated. In fact, the group was reported to attract many Gio and Mano child orphaned victims of the AFL ethnic persecution campaigns in the Nimba County at the beginning of the war.[852] The relatively high rate of all children in my survey citing protective reasons for their decisions to enlist into the group also supports the point that the *ethnic persecution* variable was indeed important in explaining the NPFL's large child soldier ratios. As I show elsewhere in this dissertation, according to my survey, the ratio of all NPFL children who joined for the reasons of protection was rather high at about 34% of all children and 71% of those child soldiers who joined the group voluntarily.

The variables of *material capacity* and *territorial access* may be less important in explaining child recruitment for this group relative to other factions. However, as I show below in Section 2, the NPFL

[852] HRW, *Easy Prey*, p. 8.

exhibited dynamically changing levels of popularity over time. More specifically, in the temporal within-case study analysis I demonstrate how the factors of *material capacity* and less so *territorial access* started exerting their influence on child soldier recruitment when the group's popularity plummeted.

With its overwhelming popularity, especially at the initial stages of the conflict, the NPFL attracted many people just on the promises of future political change, so that pecuniary rewards were not even necessary in the case of this armed group. Similarly, this popular faction did not have to engage in forced recruitment of unwilling adults, which could ultimately lead to conscription of children as a better alternative in this context. Without the necessity to recruit minors forcibly, the role of territorial access in the case of popular NPFL was relatively minor, as suggested by my extended argument.

The ***LPC*** faction, popular among Krahn and Sapo in the south of the country, generated ideological mobilization of people on a large scale. In combination with the group's extremely high fighting capacity, however, popularity alone may not have satisfied the group's need for additional combatants. Besides, the LPC operated on the territories where people of Krahn origin were awaiting armed defense against the abusive NPFL soldiers. Hence, children were joining the LPC to end their dire circumstances hiding in the forest in fear. As shown elsewhere in the text in percentage terms, the share of such children seeking protection within the LPC was very high and constituted about 50% of all children in my survey who reported to be with this faction.

The recruitment of children for the relatively popular ***Ulimo-J*** can be best assessed by adding a geographical dimension to it. Thus, as can be evident from my discussion above, the group experienced different levels of mobilization in the refugee camps in Sierra Leone and on the Liberian soil. While attracting many ideological supporters of Krahn and Mandingo origin from Sierra Leonean and even Guinean refugee camps, Ulimo-J did not have a comparably strong ethnic base in any of its occupied counties of Bomi, Lofa or Cape Mount. Thus, within Liberia the mobilization capacity for the group could be regarded as 'low'. It is possible that due to low levels of Ulimo-J's fighting capacity the demand for soldiers was rather low and the group's ranks could be filled even with the existing ideological recruits from refugee camps. However, it is evident that the group employed certain strategies to attract adult fighters in the absence of a full-scale support of the population. More specifically, Ulimo-J was compensating people from various Liberian counties for their military services. This resort to cash salaries by the faction in geographical regions where it suffered low ideological mobilization could have, in turn, filled the gaps in its ranks. Under such circumstances the levels of child soldier recruitment by the group could be expected to be low, as it indeed occurred. This particular example of Ulimo-J shows that my argument is robust not only across time, but also across space, as it rationalizes some geographic variations and trends in the variables.

The ***Ulimo-K*** armed faction, restricted with its popularity only to its limited Mandingo supportive base in Guinean refugee camps, was also observed to have high fighting capacity and high ambitions in pursuing its status of one of the major militarized players. Devoid of the ability to attract supporters from other ethnic groups, the group had to make sure that it exploits all the Mandingo reserves it had. Thus, it introduced semi-rewarding pecuniary incentives for new Mandingo recruits by allowing them to loot and to sell the stolen goods in Guinea. In this strategy it mirrored Ulimo-J, which managed to meet its demand for fighters in this way. What was different, however, is the clearly higher number of fighters needed by Ulimo-K, which was necessitated by the group's higher fighting capacity, as well as the lower scope of ideologically driven people, compared to Ulimo-J. This combination put the group into the position of having to recruit more children than Ulimo-J. The importance of the *territorial access* variable in this case is hard to establish, but with its 'medium' level in my analysis the access to people was not seen as a constraint.

As to the ***INPFL*** armed group with the established low level of popularity, the story for this faction can be reconstructed as follows. The faction's low level of fighting capacity could result in moderate demand for combatants. As the group did not attract many followers on ideological grounds, to recruit even relatively few fighters it had to resort to the practice of paying its combatants in food rations, upon which some adults indeed joined in the face of the spreading starvation in Monrovia. With the combination of low demand for combatants and presence of material compensations to the fighters, the need to recruit children by the INPFL as an alternative to forced recruitment of otherwise unwilling adults could not even occur. Without a demand for children, in turn, the role of the variable of *territorial access* was most likely reduced in its importance. At the same time, the extremely difficult access to people in the case of the INPFL, contained to only single community of the Caldwell area in the capital, might have ensured that the group's soldiers could not access many children for recruitment.

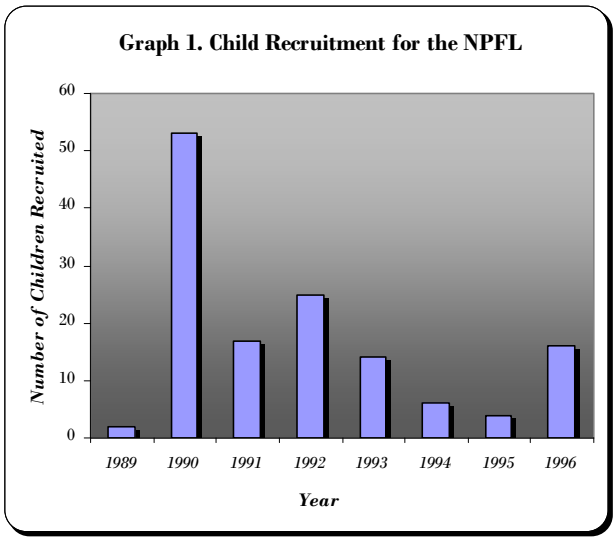
Section 2. Temporal Within-Case Study

In this section, I conduct a temporal within-case study analysis of child recruitment by the NPFL armed group during the First Liberian Civil War. First, on the basis of my survey data, I construct a longitudinal continuous measure of the dependent variable of *child soldiering* for each year between 1989 and 1996. This measure records the absolute number of former NPFL child soldiers from my survey who reported being recruited in that given year. Second, I analyze if my proposed explanatory variables of *fighting capacity*, *material capacity*, *ethnic persecution* and *territorial access*, as well as the control variables from my argument, exhibited any change over the same period of time and how, if at all, that change led to any corresponding temporal trends in the NPFL's child soldier recruitment practice. After that, I demonstrate the variation over time in the conditioning variable of *mobilization capacity* for the NPFL armed group over time to identify which of my proposed factors should be more important in

explaining the change in the dependent variable at various stages of the group's existence. I conclude the section with a summary of results from this temporal case study analysis.

Temporal Variation of Child Soldier Recruitment for the NPFL Armed Group

Graph 1 shows the distribution of child recruitment for the NPFL across time, as revealed in my survey data. In the questionnaires that my enumerators and myself were administering during the survey of the former Liberian child soldiers in Ghana, the informants were asked to recall the year they first entered an armed faction. Altogether, there were 137 former NPFL child soldiers in my survey and the information on the date of their entry into the faction was recorded for all of these informants.



During my own survey sessions, I made sure I verified the data with my respondents against the timing of well-known events occurring in Liberia at that time.[853] Many of the youth surveyed by enumerators were then interviewed by myself, whereby I would always double-check the date of their entry into the group, to ensure the correct reporting of the values of this important variable. The survey sheets which I did not verify personally and directly in the field were examined by me carefully afterwards to see whether the date of entry into the armed group corresponded with the informants' answers to other questions. For example, I examined the entry dates against 1) the name of the group (to double-check that the group actually existed at that time); 2) the geography of recruitment (to verify the possibility of the group's presence in the reported region at the time of enlistment or conscription); and 3) the location of the informants' military units (to assess if the group was operating in those areas right after the reported entry date). Some of the surveys, unverified in the field, were accompanied by narrative stories of respondents outlining the sequence of events in their lives during the Liberian conflict. Those written accounts would also put the reported entry year into a broader time perspective. In sum, I feel confident that the information on the year of recruitment, collected from former child soldiers in my survey, was close to reality.

Temporal data extracted from a survey could become problematic if potential misrepresentation occurred in the sample and children who entered armed groups later as opposed to earlier were overrepresented among respondents. Indeed, it is conceivable that those recruited earlier would have

[853] For example, after recording the entry date from respondents I asked them whether they were recruited before or after the Operation Octopus or the April 6 war – two of the major time reference point in the Liberian conflict.

lower chances of survival due to a potentially longer stay with an armed group and thus could have been absent from the data. While this problem might indeed exist, the distribution of my data does not show any skewness towards the later dates of recruitment, but on the contrary, is tilted to the earlier stages of the war. Thus, I believe that in the case of my data, the outlined problem might not become an issue. Therefore, I use my survey to construct a continuous measure for the dependent variable of *child soldiering* expressed in the numbers of new recruits from each year of the group's existence.

As can be seen on Graph 1, recruitment of children into the NPFL faction varied from year to year, and, overall, was decreasing towards the end of the war. More importantly, however, one might observe prominent spikes of recruitment in the years of 1990, 1992, and 1996 – the three most important years in the first Liberian conflict when the battles for Monrovia sparked. Below I trace temporal changes in my independent variables in order to see if any of them could have generated the decreasing trend and yearly spikes in the values of the NPFL's child recruitment practice. I also establish the variation in the values of the conditioning variable of *mobilization capacity* for the NPFL over time, so that in the discussion of the temporal changes of my independent variables I could assess if the effect of such changes was, in fact, relevant for the explanation of child soldier recruitment practice.

Temporal Variations in the Values of Explanatory Factors behind Child Recruitment Practice

Fighting Capacity

Prior to the first series of armed battles for Monrovia in the summer of 1990, the NPFL's fighting capacity was much higher than that of the government, who would have lost Monrovia if it was not for the arrival of the Ecomog soldiers. The AFL forces, once supported by Ecomog, were able to push Taylor's rebels away from the capital and successfully secure the city and the surrounding areas of Greater Monrovia. At the same time, however, the combined forces of the government and peacekeeping troops were not prepared to face guerrilla fighters of the NPFL elsewhere in the country. Consider, for example, the following account of Ecomog's struggle in combating NPFL fighters in the countryside: "... ECOMOG too was trying to minimize its own losses in the jungle terrain in pursuit of the rebels, who were not fighting a conventional war."[854] Thus, although the NPFL lost the 1990 attacks on Monrovia, the group could organize staunch resistance to the government and Ecomog troops elsewhere in the country.

The failure of the second attempt by the NPFL to overtake Monrovia in 1992 was not so obvious to Charles Taylor. He believed that the fighting capacity of his group, if combined with the expertise of the INPFL soldiers, could present a viable challenge to the AFL and Ecomog forces.[855] An unanticipated

[854] Ogunleye, *Behind Rebel Line*, p. 133.

[855] That was the setup of the Operation Octopus in October 1992. It was the last-minute betrayal of the INPFL leader that ruined this initiative. For more information on the Operation Octopus, as well as for Taylor's confidence in wining this battle, refer to Terrence Lyons, *Voting for Peace: Postconflict Election in Liberia* (Washington, DC:

event – withdrawal of the INPFL's leader Prince Johnson from the negotiated deal with Taylor – resulted in devastating consequences for the NPFL in its second attempt to conquer Monrovia.[856] After his second failure during this Operation Octopus, Taylor revised his strategy of taking over Monrovia militarily and switched to diplomatic means in getting access to the center of the country's administrative power. Nevertheless, four years of negotiating produced no satisfactory political outcome for the NPFL leader.

It was not until early 1996, when Taylor managed to form another military alliance that was meant to play to his advantage in his third attempt to overtake the capital. In December 1995, Taylor made a deal with Ulimo-J, promising Roosevelt Johnson military and financial assistance if, contrary to the Abuja peace agreement, the Ulimo-J fighters would not abandon their western diamond fields and instead attack the Ecomog forces there.[857] This attack at Tubmanburg by Ulimo-J was performed around December 1995-January 1996. Although it was not the primary goal of his political-military maneuver, the NPFL leader managed to divert attention of the Ecomog troops from the capital, if not directly undermine their capability.[858] At the same time, in his new status as a member of the governing council, Taylor took advantage of Ulimo-J's violation of the Abuja peace agreement and, together with Ulimo-K forces in Monrovia moved towards the positioning of Roosevelt Johnson's loyalists in the capital to arrest him, "under the rhetoric of respect for law and order."[859]

This latter alliance building by Taylor was so elaborate that the NPFL and Ulimo-K even obtained weapons assistance from Ecomog.[860] In this last battle for Monrovia, all that stood between Charles Taylor and full military control by his forces of the whole of Liberia, including the capital, was the Barclay Training Center, the last stronghold of any potential rival military presence in Monrovia.[861] However, at this decisive military standoff, several unanticipated factors shifted the balance of power and precluded Taylor from reaching the full-scale victory: Ulimo-J obtained backing from Ecomog, received

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Brookings Institution Press, 1999), pp. 28-34. For details on Prince Johnson's betrayal see Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, pp. 98-99.

[856] According to one former NPFL child soldier whom I interviewed and who participated in these events, the NPFL suffered severe losses during the Operation Octopus (from my interviews in Ghana, winter 2008). For dire consequences of the Operation Octopus refer to Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, pp. 98-99.

[857] Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 107.

[858] The attack of Ulimo-J in Tubmanburg reportedly incurred significant Ecomog and civilian casualties ("Liberia" in *Africa South of the Sahara*, p. 604).

[859] Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, pp. 107-108.

[860] This was the most infamous moment in the history of Ecomog's partisanship exhibited in the Liberian conflict. First, as a response to Ulimo-J's attack on Ecomog in Tubmanburg, the Nigerians started helping Taylor and Kromah, fighting against Ulimo-J. Shortly afterwards, however, the peacekeepers' commanders realized that overtaking of the Ulimo-J's last base at Barclay Training Center by the NPFL would result in the establishment of Taylor's military control over Monrovia and thus should be avoided by all means. Ecomog immediately switched its support from the NPFL and Ulimo-K to Ulimo-J faction, thus making the infamous case of "arming both sides in the battle" (Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, pp. 107-108).

[861] Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 108.

additional weapons delivery from the U.S. PAE security company, and managed to rally the support of some other militias "threatened by the prospect of complete military takeover" by the NPFL fighters.[862]

Overall, I would argue that the NPFL's fighting capacity remained rather high throughout the conflict. The fact that the group lost some of its control over the country to three new armed groups by 1994 should not be interpreted as a change in its fighting capacity, but rather viewed in the light of a multiplied number of opponents (from one to four) who still could not drive Taylor out of his core territories and could not prevent his marches to Monrovia. Taylor's firm belief in his group's military strength made him attempt to overtake the capital three times. It is the NPFL's ability to challenge the government in the countryside during the first stages of the war that made Taylor confident that his troops would be able to crush the AFL in Monrovia in 1990. They would have, if it was not for Ecomog's intervention. Then, upon the negotiated deal with the INPFL in 1992, Taylor believed to match his fighting capacity to the one of the AFL and Ecomog forces during the Operation Octopus mission to overtake Monrovia. With yet another masterminded plot in 1996 during the 'April 6 War', Taylor was poised to win over Monrovia.

Each of the three battles for the capital required a boost to the NPFL forces, since the conventional war in the open field required more body mass and larger infantry than guerrilla fighting in the back country.[863] As my survey and Graph 1 demonstrate, the NPFL's child recruitment intensified during the years of major Monrovia battles: the first NPFL attack on the capital in 1990, Operation Octopus in 1992, and the April 6 War of 1996. A large share of the NPFL child soldiers in my survey sample were recruited in Monrovia (43%), as opposed to the rest of the country (57%). These temporal and spatial patterns imply that the need for fighters was especially critical during the times of the NPFL's attacks on the capital and that the group resorted to the increased recruitment of children during those particular moments in its history. Overall, the effect of the *fighting capacity* variable can be assessed as strong.

The temporal case study allows me to perform some process-tracing and establish the sequential relationship between my variables, including *fighting capacity* and *child soldiering*. More specifically, although the NPFL's fighting capacity remained unchanged and high throughout the time of its existence, this characteristic of the armed group resulted in multiple attempts by the NPFL to attack the capital at different times. According to my argument, it is these attacks on the capital caused by high fighting capacity that should lead to higher child recruitment practice by armed groups. These temporal observations allowed me to assess the influence of Monrovian battles on child recruitment. Graph 1 confirms large effect of the *fighting capacity* variable by showing that the years of the NPFL attacks on the capital coincided with the years of spikes in child soldier recruitment by the group.

[862] Ibid., p. 108.
[863] For clarification of this point see the relevant section of Chapter 3 on the explanatory framework.

This temporal exercise of tracing the events chronology addresses the potential problem of endogeneity from my large-*N* analysis. In Chapter 5 reporting on the empirical results, I mentioned that the variable of *fighting capacity* could be endogenous by reverse causality to the dependent variable of *child soldering*, if we consider that recruitment of children by an armed group can increase (or decrease) its ability to challenge the opponent militarily. From this temporal case study it is clear, however, that it is the preparation for battles for the capital, which are the result of the group's high fighting capacity in the first place, that led to increased child soldier recruitment, and not the other way around. Alternatively, if any potential reverse causality did take place, then the decreasing scope of child soldier recruitment by the NPFL over time should have been associated with the declining fighting capacity of the group. As I showed in this temporal case study, the NPFL's fighting capacity, or ability to challenge the government and other opponents elsewhere in the country except Monrovia, remained high throughout the war. While it is clear that fighting capacity was associated with child soldier recruitment by the NPFL during attacks on the capital, that variable did not explain the decreasing trend in the group's practice. Thus, the following examination of other three factors from my argument is particularly important in this regard.

Material Capacity

It might be argued that the material capacity of the NPFL, as well as its policy or ability to compensate its fighters, has evolved throughout the group's existence. In terms of its financial capability, the group got hold of multiple industrial and trade concessions already at the beginning of the conflict in 1990 and managed to keep them until the end of the war. The absence of cash compensations to the NPFL soldiers was also persistent throughout the war, with Taylor paying only his high military commanders and important administrative people on the territory of the Greater Liberia.[864] There was just one minor and probably insignificant change in that policy which occurred after 1994 when the NPFL started paying 1,500 Liberian dollars (US$40) per month to its Motorcade Unit personnel.[865] This was the NPFL division responsible for Taylor's personal security, as well as the group's intelligence provision. The Motorcade unit consisted of pre-selected loyal fighters from the commanding ranks, whose ardent support for the faction needed to be further nourished as time went on. Unlike the foot soldiers in the infantry divisions, the Motorcade personnel required experience and training and could not be easily refilled by ordinary new recruits. While the introduction of salaries for the Motorcade unit represented some change in the NPFL's paying practice, it did not result in compensation to new recruits. Therefore, this latter change cannot be interpreted as a temporal shift in the NPFL's rewards system.

[864] Absence of payment by the NPFL to its soldiers, with the exception of high military commanders and administrative personnel, was noted in Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, pp. 91, 114.
[865] From my interviews with a former NPFL child soldier from the Motorcade Unit (Ghana, winter 2008).

One policy related to material compensation of fighters – that is allowing soldiers to loot – has undergone significant changes since 1990, however. During the first several months of the NPFL's existence, until the unsuccessful attacks on Monrovia in 1990, the soldiers of the group were prohibited from looting civilians. At least two witnesses to Charles Taylor's address to his fighters in 1990 and 1991 reported the NPFL leader's call for no looting or raping.[866] While such public speeches could have been designed to impress foreigners and civilians alike, whose political support Taylor was seeking, some other accounts provided below tend to show that at least in some geographical places and by some NPFL units this rhetoric was actually implemented. Thus, one of the former NPFL child soldiers, whom I interviewed and who was with the NPFL in the Bong and Nimba Counties during 1990, noted that commanders were providing "food and things" to fighters and the soldiers were not allowed to loot.[867]

The loss by the NPFL in Monrovia in the summer of 1990, however, somewhat changed that restriction on the soldiers' discipline. The realization by 'freedom fighters' that the promised revolutionary redistribution of benefits will not occur, as the group did not win the capital, made them resort to capturing themselves what they could. The looting of the city began, and was widely recorded in the literature:

> "Looting, which had been checked to the barest minimum among the rebels before the arrival of the intervention force, suddenly rose to an unprecedented level when the rebels saw their dreams shattered by ECOMOG. So as not to lose out completely, they resorted to large-scale looting of electronic goods, equipments, and electrical appliances, etc. Most looted properties found their way across the border for sale in Cote d'Ivoire and Sierra Leone while some were retained for personal use in Liberia in the belief that, even if they finally ended up not gaining power in Monrovia, they would still need goods to settle with – the only way they could compensate themselves, since they earned no salary."[868]

> "When the NPFL first reached Monrovia in July 1990, fighters flocked to the battlefront to be in at the climax. This was the chance of a lifetime to acquire something valuable from Monrovia, home of the wealthy and source of imported goods. Many of the young country boys and girls who joined up to take part in the battle of Monrovia had never been to the city before. The fighters were in carnival mood, especially those lucky enough to catch a ride down to the battlefront… As the fighters came into Monrovia's suburbs they often painted their names on individual houses, believing that when the fighting was over they could come and reclaim the property as a prize of war. Everything they could carry, they took away."[869]

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[866] For example, Mark Huband, a British journalist who happened to attend the parade of the NPFL's forces at the faction's base in Nimba County in 1990, recalled Taylor's address to the fighters: "Anybody found raping or looting will face a firing squad" (Huband, *The Liberian Civil War*, p. 77). According to another witness of Taylor's speech to soldiers and civilians alike in Kakata, Margibi County, in June 1991, the NPFL's leader again urged the military personnel to treat civilians well and asked the citizens to report any misdeeds to G2 offices or Police Stations (Ogunleye, *Behind Revel Lines*, p. 66). The G2 refers to the NPFL's military intelligence organ (Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 113).

[867] From my interviews in Ghana, winter 2008.

[868] Ogunleye, *Behind Revel Lines*, p. 81.

[869] Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 115.

> "By July 1990 there was a booming trade in looted goods exported overland by NPFL fighters for sale in the markets of Cote d'Ivoire, especially in the town of Danane."[870]

The plundering in Monrovia in 1990 by Taylor's fighters was distinct, however, from the other subsequent looting of the capital by the NPFL in 1992 and 1996. First, it was more concentrated on public property, such as warehouses, large stores, and supermarkets, rather than civilian property.[871] NPFL's focus on bigger targets is reflected in the example when the group captured a Greek ship with rice and redirected it from Monrovia to Buchanan, where the fighters' base was established by that time.[872] Second, as the example above also suggests, there was a tendency during this first stage of the NPFL looting practice to accumulate the wealth in the hands of high military command, which also implied the surrender of booty by foot soldiers after the looting missions. Consider the following ethnographic account from Ellis: "The chances of a lowly fighter making enough money to retire from the fray were slim, at least after the first battle of Monrovia, since a commander would soon detect any object of value being held by one of his or her combatants and would relieve the fighter in turn."[873] The same tendency of unequal loot opportunities was persistent during the second attack on Monrovia in 1992, as evident from the following account:

> Many of them, during [Operation] Octopus [in 1992], went to their early deaths hoping to acquire valuables from their misadventure in Monrovia. For those who were lucky enough to obtain anything at all, the Generals of some General took it away from them. And, as a young fighter put it, 'you go to the front, you fight, anything good you get, they take it from you. That's why you see some of those boys at the Front they don't want to come to Gbarnga because if they bring anything good, they will take it from them'.[874]

The looting practice first established in Monrovia in 1990 did not spill into uncontrolled chaos in the territories under the NPFL's control. On the contrary, the behavior of the NPFL fighters behind the so-called 'rebel lines' on the territory of Greater Liberia was more contained and restrained until at least 1994. For example, according to one non-partisan witness account recorded for villages around the town of Gbeh, Margibi County, which were under the NPFL's control, the 'freedom fighters' did not loot civilians but rather bought things and sometimes women in exchange for food obtained from the group's headquarters in Gbarnga.[875] Somewhere near Monrovia commandos even paid civilian landlords for staying on their property.[876] Remarkable in this regard is the journey of one witness through the battle-torn Monrovia in 1990 into the detention and hostage camp for the Nigerians upon Taylor's orders for

[870] Ibid., p. 114.
[871] Ogunleye, *Behind Revel Lines*, p. 39.
[872] Ibid., p. 39.
[873] Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 126.
[874] Ibid., p. 126.
[875] Ogunleye, *Behind Rebel Line*, pp. 103, 105.
[876] Ibid., pp. 129-30.

containment and extinction of this nationality which was disproportionately represented in Ecomog forces. More specifically, he and his fellow captives were never robbed completely of their money, but were solicited to pay bribes at the checkpoints in Monrovia, a detention center in Kakata, and on the way to and within the remote hostage camp on the Kakata-Bong highway where they ultimately ended up being incarcerated.[877] In relative terms, the NPFL was even regarded as one of the "least destructive" occupying factions, which apparently "was one of the reasons causing people to vote for Charles Taylor as president of Liberia in July 1997."[878]

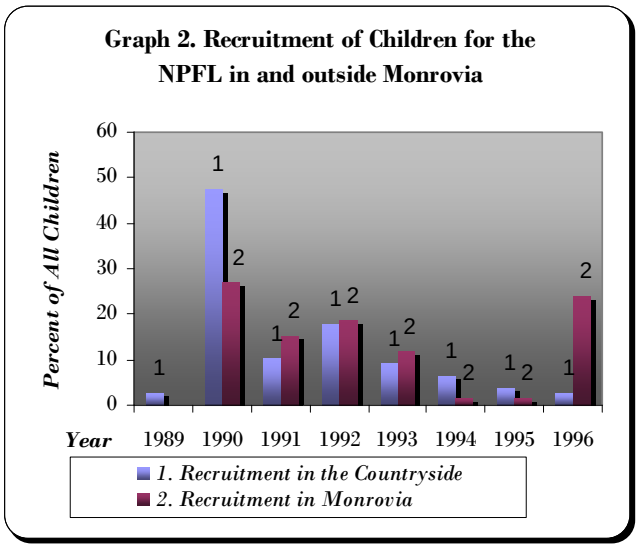
In a sense, there was this illusion cultivated by rebels during the first Liberian conflict – that is of them being 'freedom fighters'. It prevented them from looting openly and at large, but at the same time did not preclude from getting at least something, albeit clandestinely. Consider how the rebels tried to preserve this ideational image of themselves: "the money and goods seized from the hostages at Kakata depot was said to have been used to "buy essential items" for the inmates," or "drugs for local clinic."[879] In other words, this behavior created a vision that "daily life continues with some degree of normality" – in line with the headlines issued by Charles Taylor.[880] As Ogunleye assessed this situation in his own words: "You dared not tell a rebel that your things had been taken by his colleagues, lest you incurred his wrath, because they were 'freedom fighters' and their work was to protect lives and property."[881]

This atmosphere of 'normalcy' largely collapsed after 1994, when renewed fighting of the NPFL with three new armed groups in addition to the government increased the pressure on Taylor's forces and the policy of not paying them backfired: the "NPFL troops in some areas took to wholesale looting of the towns they occupied."[882] The infamous "Tappita Massacre" in Nimba County refers to the "lethal intra-factional firefight" and execution of town leaders and civilians as a result of tensions over the city's looting rights between the NPFL units.[883] The last battle for Monrovia was a culmination of this tendency that led to the "orgy of looting." Unlike the plundering of the city in 1990 and 1992, this time it went completely out of the control, with an absolute breakdown of law and order. "Crucially, Taylor's forces were more interested in looting than fighting," as reflected in the infamous nickname given to this April 6 War offensive by the NPFL fighters – the 'Operation Pay Yourself'.[884] According to Ellis, this was "the last great attempt to loot 'as a form of compensation for the combatants who have fought for several years

[877] For such multiple encounters between Nigerians and different NPFL soldiers refer to Ogunleye, *Behind Rebel Line.*
[878] Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 129. Consider in this regard the following account of one Kissi chief: "'Taylor is our son,' because 'when his men came, they left us alone. We were doing our farming. They did not take our belongings. But when ULIMO [K] arrived, they took everything across the border'" (Ibid., p. 129).
[879] Ibid., pp. 118, 121.
[880] Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 91.
[881] Ogunleye, *Behind Rebel Line*, p. 118.
[882] Ibid., pp. 91-92.
[883] For the description of this incident refer to Cain, "The Rape of Dinah," p. 362.
[884] Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 108.

without any benefit from the leaders.'"[885] At the same time, the battle also served as material enrichment opportunity for new recruits: "Some sources reckon that a disproportionate number of fighters in April 1996 were from Lofa, people who had previously little chance for serious looting."[886] Ironically, by April 1996 "many fighters seemed to have no idea why they were fighting at all, other than to acquire loot."[887]

In sum, it can be concluded from the discussion above that with time, particularly after 1994, the opportunities to acquire wealth through loot for every NPFL soldier, no matter how low-ranking, had increased. This boosted the numbers of adult volunteers enticed by profiteering and thus, according to my argument, helps explain the decrease in child recruitment for the NPFL over time. The accounts above also stressed the uniqueness of the year 1996, when the possibilities of looting in Monrovia were wide open for incumbent and new recruits alike, irrespective of their ranks. This trend can be reflected in Graph 2 which shows a difference across time in the regional patterns of recruitment of minors by the NPFL. Note that at the initial stages of the war the group's child recruitment outside Monrovia prevailed. At a later stage, though, the relative recruitment rates in and outside the capital largely matched up until 1996 when the child recruitment occurred primarily in the capital, not in the countryside. Thus, Graph 2 demonstrates that the changes in material compensation to the NPFL soldiers across time could have indeed affected the group's child recruitment practice in the way my argument postulates.[888] More specifically, it is most likely that the initial demand for soldiers in the countryside in 1996 prior to the attack on Monrovia was filled by adult soldiers who joined to participate in the city loot. When the NPFL forces reached Monrovia, however, those profiteers, uncommitted to the group's goal, started deserting immediately after their ultimate personal objective to acquire loot had been satisfied. At this point, as Graph 2 shows, the recruitment of children in Monrovia skyrocketed, arguably to fill in the depleting ranks of the NPFL.



[885] Ibid., p. 108.
[886] Ibid., p. 124.
[887] Ibid., p. 127.
[888] In this chapter's sub-section on ethnic persecution I show that this recruitment pattern of the NPFL in 1996 cannot be explained by the *ethnic persecution* variable. In the discussion dedicated below to the *territorial access* variable I also establish that this geographical differences of child recruitment cannot be attributed entirely to the reduction of the NPFL's territorial control towards the end of the war.

Ethnic Persecution

As has been discussed in the cross-group case study of Chapter 6, the ethnic persecution motives should have ranked among the strongest ones for children joining the NPFL, as the group was operating in zones where ethnic cleansing was perpetrated by all parties to the conflict. Ethnic killings were evident in the country at the first stages of the war: with the persecution of Gio and Mano by Doe government soldiers in 1989-1990 and the immediate response of the NPFL group itself by mass genocidal execution of the Krahn and Mandingo tribes. Children, orphaned as a result of these campaigns, were allegedly among the first voluntary recruits for the NPFL in the Nimba County.[889] Krahn and Mandingo children from my interviews attested joining the NPFL to protect the lives of themselves and their families by striking such a deal with the perpetrators.

As time went on, however, one would expect the people of endangered tribes to either perish in bloody killings or migrate out of the areas of the NPFL control. As such, the persecution of Gio and Mano people in the countryside and Monrovia ceased as of 1990 and the pool of Krahn and Mandingo tribes in the country should have decreased as the war raged. As noticed in the literature, over time the "NPFL targeting of Krahn and Mandingo in the early stages soon gave way to systematic looting and arbitrary violence, deliberately encouraged as a means of fighter motivation."[890]

In addition, from 1992 there were at least four other armed factions in Liberia whom children could have joined for protective reasons if they had to. This ensured, for instance, that most Krahn and Mandingo people did not have to enlist voluntarily for the NPFL in exchange for protection of their own lives and the lives of their families, as it was common during the initial stages of the Liberian conflict. Thus, the variable of *ethnic persecution* exhibited a declining trend from its high values to lower ones. This, in turn, could have explained the decreasing trend in the child soldier ratios of the group, due to fewer children being accepted on the grounds of ethnic orphans protection.

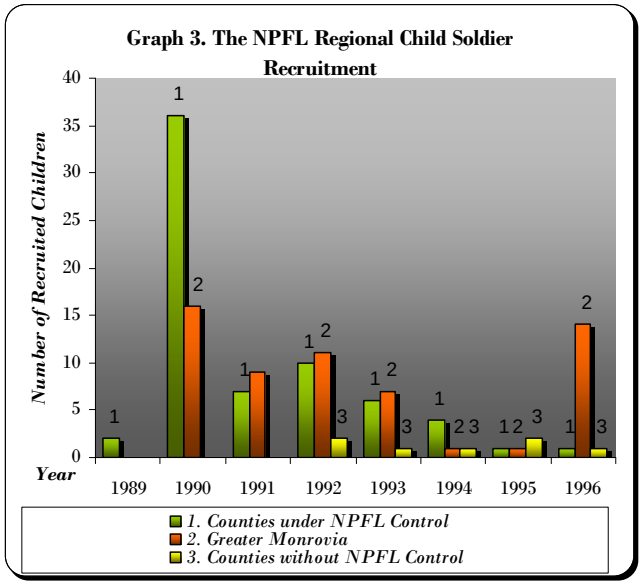
Territorial Control

The NPFL group was known to control the largest amount of territory out of all five Liberian factions. However, this was not the case throughout the entire conflict. Taylor's forces started the armed struggle successfully by establishing control over all of Liberia except Monrovia. These possessions reduced by some 50% between the years of 1993 and 1994, as the NPFL was challenged by two armed wings of the Ulimo armed group in the north and the LPC faction in the south. As a result, from 1994 until the end of armed hostilities in late 1996, the NPFL only sustained control in parts of the Nimba, Bong, Maryland, Margibi, and Grand Gedeh Counties, which geographically represented less than a half

[889] HRW, *Easy Prey*, p. 8.
[890] Quentin Outram, "It's Terminal Either Way: an Analysis of Armed Conflict in Liberia, 1989-1996," *Review of African Political Economy*, Vol. 24, No. 73, 1997, p. 367, cited in Harris, "From 'Warlord' to 'Democratic' President," pp. 447-48.

of the Liberian territory. Therefore, the potential difference in the falling NPFL's child recruitment rate could have been explained by increasingly difficult access by the armed group to territories and people.

To test the role of the *territorial access* variable in the dynamic evolution of the NPFL's child recruitment, I observe the absolute child recruitment rate in the counties with and without the group's control. As Graph 3 demonstrates, the recruitment of minors in the territories without established NPFL presence (except Monrovia) was meager compared to child soldier rates from the territories to which the group had exclusive access. When the territories under the NPFL control started gradually receding between 1992 and 1996, the share of children recruited in the remaining controlled counties started falling relative to recruitment in Monrovia, with the ultimate culmination of conscription in the capital in 1996.



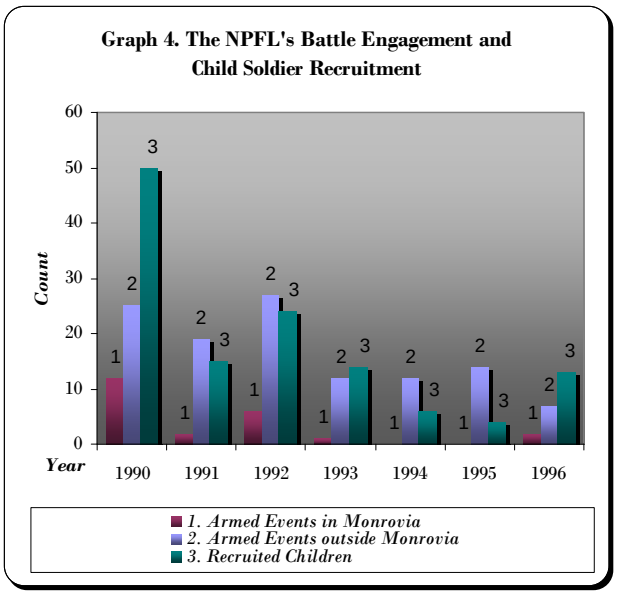
Temporal Changes in Control Variables

As has been mentioned in Chapter 4 on methodology, the temporal case study, which is a variant of the within-case study, represents a unique scientific setup in terms of allowing the researcher to achieve maximum comparability of cases. Thus, by examining only one armed group across time I ensure that my control variables, such as pre-war *poverty* levels, for example, and the *timing of conflict*, do not change. As to the control variable of *conflict duration*, it is this very time dimension and the change in factors over the years that is being analyzed in the temporal case study. As outlined in Chapter 3 on the explanatory framework, the conflict duration argument postulates the extinction of adult manpower resources towards the end of the conflict and the increase of child soldier recruitment practice as a result of it. My data on the NPFL's child recruitment demonstrates, however, that the values of the dependent variable were declining over time, not increasing, contrary to the *conflict duration* argument. Thus, the support offered in the temporal case study for this control variable was relatively weak.

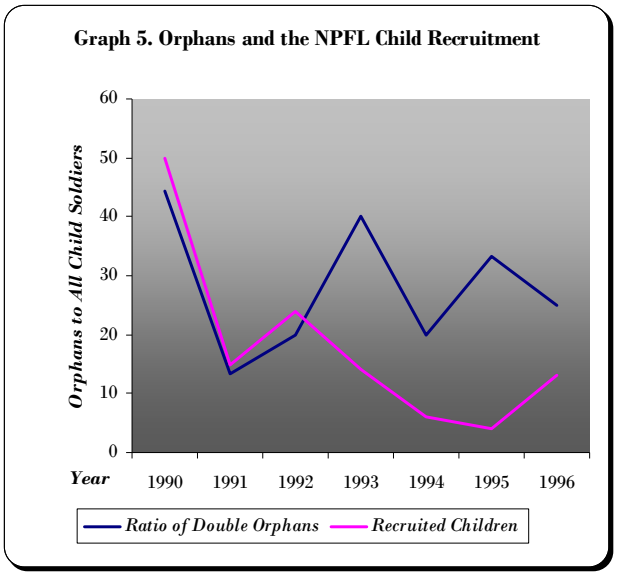
Another control variable from my explanatory framework, *conflict intensity*, requires more attention. In this chapter, in the sub-section on *fighting capacity*, I discussed the variation in the armed struggle intensity over time in terms of occurrence of conventional battles for the capital. As specified in my explanatory framework, however, the control variable of *conflict intensity* stresses the importance of manpower availability and therefore war casualties or the number of all armed events as the traditional measures of the concept. It was not possible for me to identify yearly observations of battle deaths in the

Liberian war in general and, even more so, for the NPFL armed group specifically. Nevertheless, I could collect information on the yearly number of armed events that this faction engaged in during the course of the conflict.

Graph 4 demonstrates yearly changes in the number of NPFL's battles, both in Monrovia and elsewhere in the country, juxtaposed with the absolute numbers of children recruited for the group in my sample. Arguably, it might be concluded from this graph that the child recruitment patterns follow more closely the events in Monrovia rather than conflict intensity elsewhere in the country. Thus, the temporal case study allows me to show that it is not the *conflict intensity* of an armed group *per se* that leads to child recruitment, but its military strength to challenge the opponents up to the point of engaging the latter in direct military confrontation over the capital. An armed group might engage in many armed clashes in the periphery, but lose them all, in which case its chances to recruit children are lower than if it had won those marginal battles and proceeded to attack the capital.



The analysis of the NPFL group's child recruitment over time permits to assess the predictive power of yet another control variable of *orphaning*. If the NPFL were targeting orphans specifically, every time an orphan was recruited, the ratio of orphans to children in the ranks of rebels would increase. Thus, if the data had displayed a decreasing rate of orphans relative to all recruited children over time, it could have signified that 'orphans argument' was working as orphans were less targeted and, therefore, the number of child soldiers recruitment by the NPFL dropped.



Graph 5 contrasts the trend in child recruitment with the changes in ratios of double orphans (both parents died) to non-orphans and single-orphans (one parent died) combined. This visual representation demonstrates the presence of a similar trend for the first three years. More

specifically, both absolute numbers of the NPFL recruited children in my sample and the ratio of orphans among them dropped. This could mean that over time the NPFL was targeting fewer orphans and, as a result, its numbers of child recruits dropped. However, after 1992, the association between orphans and child recruitment became less clear-cut. While the numbers of child soldiers were steadily decreasing, the ratio of orphans to non-orphans was actually fluctuating and remained high. Thus, the NPFL temporal data on child recruitment provides some limited but inconclusive support to the 'orphans argument.'

Temporal Variation in the Conditioning Variable of the Mobilization Capacity

As has been mentioned earlier in this chapter, the mobilization capacity of the NPFL armed group was exhibiting some changes over time. More specifically, the group's popularity decreased as the war was raging. The faction succeeded in mobilizing people on ethnic and revolutionary ideological grounds at the initial stages of the conflict, primarily driving on Gio and Mano (as well as other tribes in the country) antagonistic feelings against the ruling President Doe and his Krahn and Mandingo supporters. As one source summarizes what I detailed in Section 1, "Taylor's war had been widely popular when it began. Everyone wanted to get rid of Doe."[891] "But Taylor's method was to exploit the genocidal rage of the Gio and the Mano," and as such the popularity of a group did not last too long.[892]

NPFL's arbitrary violence against civilians and purges within the ranks of the armed group itself soon diminished the people's appreciation of the 'revolutionary' group and its 'freedom fighters'. As time went on, even recruits who joined the movement for ideological reasons became disillusioned and started doubting the causes the group was fighting for. One of the informants in my survey, who enlisted into Taylor's group voluntarily, left the faction soon afterwards because he felt that the "motif of NPFL was not right" and the group "was killing their own soldiers and was very wacky to their own members."[893] Thus, the label of 'freedom fighters' in relation to Taylor's forces had soon given way to a word 'rebels', used by civilian population.[894]

With the decline in the NPFL's popularity over time, the levels of the group's child recruitment, according to my extended argument, should be explained by different variables at the onset of the Liberian conflict and towards its end. More specifically, in the initial stages of the war I would expect that child recruitment should be explained primarily by the factors of *fighting capacity* and *ethnic persecution*. The variables of *fighting capacity*, *material capacity* and *territorial access*, however, should matter more

[891] Bill Berkeley, "Liberia Between Repression and Slaughter," *The Atlantic Monthly*, December 1992.
[892] Ibid.
[893] From my interview with a former NPFL child soldier in Ghana, winter 2008.
[894] At least two of my interviewees while delivering their stories referred to the NPFL insurgents as 'freedom fighters'. Both were describing the events of the NPFL's military advancement towards Monrovia in 1990. Two other child soldiers who spoke to me about their encounters with the NPFL in 1992 and 1994 mentioned 'freedom fighters' in relation to the group, but emphasized the hypocrisy of using such term which did not reflect the behavior of Taylor's soldiers. Otherwise, most of my informants referred to the NPFL fighters as 'rebels'.

towards the end of the armed struggle. The outcomes of my extended argument, as observed in the temporal case study, are summarized in Table 17.

Table 17. NPFL's Popularity and Prediction of its Child Soldier Recruitment over Time

NPFL timeline	*Fighting capacity*	*Material capacity*	*Ethnic persecution*	*Territorial access*	*CS predicted*	*CS actual*
Popular initial stage	High {High}	Low {High}	High {High}	High {High}	HIGHER	HIGHER
Unpopular later stage	High {High}	High {Low}	Low {Low}	Low {Low}	LOWER	LOWER

* In curly brackets {} I report the predicted value for child soldier recruitment from one specific value of the independent variable reflected in each cell. Column 6 stands for the overall predicted value for child soldier practice based on the analysis of all four predictive values from each explanatory factor.

The *fighting capacity* variable in the case of the NPFL did not exhibit any change while maintaining high values throughout the war. Therefore, the decreasing trend of child soldier recruitment should be explained by other variables in the two sets of explanatory factors for popular and unpopular stages of the NPFL (listed in the non-shaded cells of Table 17). During the initial popular stage of the group the factor of *ethnic persecution* should be at its highest level to generate high child recruitment for the NPFL. High values of the variables of *fighting capacity* and *ethnic persecution* thus predict high ranges of child recruitment at the popular stage of the group.

Towards the end of the war, when popularity of the rebels decreased, the alternative variables of *material capacity* and *territorial access* should have increased their explanatory power. As the temporal change in the policy to allow looting has demonstrated, the increased load of material rewards for new adult recruits could have been associated with more adult volunteers and thus fewer child soldiers. The loss by the group of half of its territories to the rival factions towards the end of the armed struggle is reflected in the lower level of *territorial access* variable for the NPFL at this stage of conflict. It could also contribute to the lower levels of child soldier recruitment.

It should be noted here, though, that unlike in the cross-case study, in the temporal analysis I could not establish that explanatory power of my four independent variables should be different for popular and unpopular stages of the armed movement. While my analysis did confirm the predictive power of restricted variables, it did not suggest their exclusive importance in relation to the excluded variables compared to other factors in my non-extended argument. Thus, the levels of *material capac*ity and *territorial access* at the popular stage of the armed group could also predict high rates of child soldier recruitment. Similarly, the low level of *ethnic persecution* towards the end of the conflict could also suggest low child recruitment. It is unclear whether the inconclusiveness of this particular point is due to data limitations, mere correlation of the excluded variables with their potential child soldier predictions, or their actual explanatory power.

Summary

Extended Cross-case Comparison. This detailed case study has established the differences in the predictive power of my four proposed explanatory factors behind child soldier recruitment for popular and unpopular armed groups. One of these groups – the NPFL – represents a unique case in itself: since its mobilization capacity was changing over time from very high to very low, it is possible to review the relative predictive power of explanatory factors within this case across time. This is what I attempted in my temporal case study in Section 2.

Temporal Case Study. The temporal case study of the NPFL armed group generated several findings. First, disaggregation of the group's child recruitment by year of conscription revealed spikes in my dependent variable of *child soldiering* in the years of the group's attacks on the capital. While the value of *fighting capacity* remained mostly unchanged over the course of the war, the dates of attacks on the capital, as a result of persistent and high fighting capacity of the rebel movement, were spread over time. This allowed me to trace the strong effect of *fighting capacity* variable on child soldiers: the NPFL's child recruitment intensified during the years of major battles for Monrovia.

Second, the temporal case study identified a change in the variable of *material capacity* over time, revealing more opportunities to loot for adult combatants towards the end of the war. Therefore, this variable could have explained the decrease in the absolute numbers of children recruited by the NPFL. Moreover, in the largest plundering operation in the capital in 1996 more adults joined the faction for this lucrative opportunity than ever before. It is in this year that the geography of NPFL's main incidence of child recruitment turned from the countryside to the capital.

Third, the temporal analysis demonstrated that the variable of *ethnic persecution* also changed over time. Both the policy of the NPFL towards killing rival tribes and the numbers of victims towards the end of the war were abating. Therefore, the variable of *ethnic persecution* could also help explain the observed decreasing trend in the NPFL's child recruitment. Fourth, the variable of *territorial access* in the case of the NPFL changed in the same direction as the dependent variable, which could have made territorial access responsible for a part of the declining trend. Fifth, the case study also demonstrated that none of the control variables which developed over time (*conflict duration*, *conflict intensity*, and *orphaning*) was a significant predictor of the decreasing temporal pattern of NPFL's child recruitment.

Sixth, the temporal case study also showed that the variable of *mobilization capacity* in itself was not an explanatory factor of child recruitment. As the NPFL's popularity decreased over time, a potentially matching increase in child recruitment did not occur, with the actual child soldier numbers decreasing over time. As a conditioning variable, however, the *mobilization capacity* generated two distinct phases in the existence of the NPFL – popular and unpopular – in which different independent variables predicted different child soldier outcomes very accurately.

Chapter 8: Plausibility Probes

Up to this point my explanatory framework was largely confirmed in both large-*N* empirical tests on the sample of African insurgencies and in case studies on Liberia. In order to assess the potential generalizability of my argument to armed movements outside of the African continent, in this chapter I conduct two plausibility probes of my explanatory argument in the South-East Asian and Latin American context. More specifically, I evaluate the predictive strength of my hypotheses when applied to the LTTE armed group in Sri Lanka and the FARC guerilla movement in Colombia. The importance of such an exercise is highlighted by the fact that, unlike in the African context, we might expect both historical and modern armed movements of Asia and Latin America to be more popular among their populations. In contrast, insurgencies in Africa tend to be subjected to a lower degree of popularity (the average score on the *mobilization capacity* variable in my African sample was 0.45 on a scale between 0 and 1). Meanwhile, in my search I did not encounter any reference to an Asian or Latin American group that could be labeled as unpopular to the extent found in Africa.

As empirical tests of my extended explanatory framework confirmed so far, in the case of popular rebels, *ethnic persecution* predicts the scope of child soldier recruitment by the militants. Moreover, the control variable of *poverty* was also found in my analysis to affect the level of child recruitment of popular armed groups, albeit to a lesser extent then *ethnic persecution*. Therefore, in the two case studies which are to follow in two consecutive sections in this chapter after a brief summary of each conflict, I first establish the high level of popularity of armed groups in question. Then I assess the values of my predictive factor of *ethnic persecution* and control variable of *poverty* through the analysis of the secondary sources. I then make a prediction for the child recruitment practice on the basis of the values of the independent variables. Finally, I compare the predicted values with the actual levels of child recruitment, the data for which I obtained from existing reports, books and articles. In conclusions to this chapter I comment on the strength of my argument.

Section 1: The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) of Sri Lanka

Conflict Description

The secessionist militarized conflict between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the Sri Lankan government started in 1983. Since the onset of armed struggle, the LTTE was seeking an independent homeland for the minority Tamil population in the north and east of the country.[895] One of the longest-running civil wars in Asia, the conflict lasted for over 25 years with brief cease-fire

[895] Charu Lata Hogg, "Sri Lanka: The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and Child Recruitment," CSUCS, Forum on Armed Groups and the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, Chateau de Bossey, Switzerland, July 4-7, 2006, p. 1.

intermissions in 1990, 1994-95, and 2001-2003.[896] India, which has its own Tamil population in the south, deployed a peacekeeping force in 1987 that left three years later following the escalation of violence.[897] During the ensuing conflict, the LTTE was able to challenge Sri Lankan forces from the Jaffna Peninsula in the north down through the eastern side of the island.[898] Since the end of this last cease-fire in early 2000s, the Sri Lankan military has been trying to root out the LTTE and, following a fierce, year-long military offensive, the government claimed in May 2009 that it had defeated the separatist group and killed its leader Vellupillai Prabhakaran.[899]

As a result of armed hostilities in the country, more than 70,000 people were estimated to be killed by 2008.[900] The last few months of fighting between the government and the militants resulted in a large number of civilian casualties and censure from the international community.[901] By 2005, the conflict displaced about 800,000 internally and about 600-800,000 as refugees to other countries.[902] More than 200,000 refugees were just as a result of hostilities in Jaffna in 1996.[903] In February 2007 the UN estimated that more that 200,000 civilians have fled their homes since April 2006, raising the total number of internally displaced to nearly half a million.[904] Increased fighting in the country's north in early 2009 was reported to uproot an additional 250,000 people.[905] According to recent reports by Human

[896] Jayshree Bajoria, "The Sri Lankan Conflict," Backgrounders from Council on Foreign Relations, URL: http://www.cfr.org/publication/11407. For peace accords and cease-fires in the Sri Lankan conflict refer to Hogg, "Sri Lanka," pp. 2-3; "Ceasefire Raises Sri Lankan Peace Hopes," *The Guardian*, February 22, 2002, URL: http://www.guardian.co.uk/international/story/0,3604,655451,00.html. In December 2001 "a unilateral cease-fire was declared by the LTTE on 25 December 2001" followed by "peace negotiations, facilitated in part by the Norwegian government" ("Child Soldiers: CRC Country Briefs," Pre-Sessional Working Group, 33rd Session, February 3-7, 2003). "A formal ceasefire agreement between the government and the LTTE followed in February 2002" (CSUCS, *Child Soldiers*, 2004, op. cit., p.1). "Peace talks and negotiations took place in Norway, Germany and Thailand in 2002 and 2003… In April 2003 the talks broke down, according to the LTTE…The ceasefire held" (Ibid., p.1).

[897] Bajoria, "The Sri Lankan Conflict."

[898] Ibid.

[899] Ibid. "But the group may continue to launch guerilla-type attacks on the country" (Ibid.).

[900] Randeep Ramesh, "Jailed Tamil Warlord has Deadly Influence on Election," *The Guardian*, March 7, 2008. Aproximately 64,000 people were killed in a war by the year 2006 (Hogg, "Sri Lanka," p. 1).

[901] Bajoria, "The Sri Lankan Conflict."

[902] The conflict "displaced an estimated six hundred thousand from their homes since 1983" (Jimmie Briggs, *Innocents Lost: When Child Soldiers Go to War* (New York, NY: Basic Books, Perseus Books Group, 2005), p. 83). "In 2001, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees estimated that 800,000 people were internally displaced, and another 817,000 had taken refuge in other countries" (Nicolas Sambanis, "Civil War Coding Notes," p. 206, Annotation to the Dataset used in Nicholas Sambanis, 2004, "What is Civil War? Conceptual and Empirical Complexities of an Operational Definition," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 48 (6): 814-858).

[903] Sambanis, "Civil War Coding Notes," p. 207.

[904] Somini Sengupta, "Sri Lankan Government Finds Support from Buddhist Monks," *The New York Times*, February 25, 2007, URL: http://www.nytimes.com/2007/02/25/world/asia/25lanka.html?pagewanted=1 (last accessed December 6, 2009).

[905] Bajoria, "The Sri Lankan Conflict."

Rights Watch and Amnesty International, both the Sri Lankan military and the LTTE were violating international laws of war, engaging in widespread human rights abuses, and placed civilians at risk.[906]

Group Popularity

The LTTE enjoyed high levels of popularity among its constituency since its inception. The LTTE's struggle for a Tamil homeland of Eelam has been characterized as a liberation struggle which would ultimately lead to the creation of a casteless Tamil nation.[907] The LTTE based its political ideology on the belief that "the majority Sinhala nation will not recognize the Tamil people's national identity and their legitimate claim to political power and an armed struggle to fulfill this ultimate objective is both necessary and desirable."[908] Its particular brand of Tamil nationalism selectively revives religious concepts relating to a martyr cult.[909] Such claims found wide resonance among economically deprived Tamil agricultural workers whose families lost their livelihood due to economic reforms in the late 1970s, as well as unemployed urban Tamil youth who faced "economic and social discrimination."[910]

Stories of dedication to a popular armed group by the Tamil people abide. With some exceptions, they were reported to join the armed movement willingly throughout the conflict. Moreover, as a part of the LTTE's strategy, its members were willing to sacrifice their lives in suicide bombings for the independence of the Eelam. Between 1987 and ceasefire in 2002 the LTTE has carried out more than 170 suicide attacks, "exceeding any other single group around the world."[911] An infamous practice of LTTE's fighters to swallow cyanide capsules prior to being captured by the government also attests to the dedication to the movement's cause.

The Tamil propaganda branded the group as "freedom fighters" to foster further support in Sri Lanka and abroad.[912] The degree of dedication to the group by its members stands out among other conflicts in the world. The following extract represents the perceptions about the group's membership of one local LTTE commander interviewed by a journalist in the field:

> "The LTTE succeeds because this is the people's base movement, movement with the people's support... Becoming a Tiger is a personal choice. In the course of participating in the struggle, some militants prefer to commit themselves to be a member of the Tigers. I feel that this is more constructive and productive in terms of commitment, but my leader decides whether that person

[906] Bajoria, "The Sri Lankan Conflict." For example, "in April 2009, Human Rights Watch reported while rebels were preventing civilians from leaving the last tiny strip of land where they were fighting the government forces, the government forces repeatedly and indiscriminately shelled the area. UN satellite images suggested the government shelled "no-fire zone" (*Guardian*) where more than 50,000 people were trapped" (Ibid).
[907] Hogg, "Sri Lanka," p. 5.
[908] Ibid., p. 5.
[909] Ibid., p. 5.
[910] Ibid., p. 9.
[911] Tore Bjørgo (ed.), *Root Causes of Terrorism: Myths, Reality and Ways Forward* (New York: Routledge, 2005), p. 73, citing Gunaratna 2000 and Schweitzer 2001.
[912] David Gray, Tom Owen Matchin, "Children: The New Face of Terrorism," *International NGO Journal*, June 2008, Vol. 3(6), pp. 108-114, p. 110, p. 109.

> is capable, suitable or preferable to be a member of the Tigers. This is the manifestation of the highly motivated commitment to sacrifice their life for the liberation of Tamil Eelam."[913]

According to the observations of the same correspondent, the place of the LTTE control where the interview took place was in a "well-maintained and comparatively prosperous" district.[914]

Massive financial support of the group by the Tamil diaspora is yet another testimony to the group's immense popularity. Various sources estimated the amount of money flowing from the Canadian diaspora to the LTTE in the late 1990s at somewhere between Cdn$1 million and Cdn$12 million a year.[915] Some 80 to 90 percent of the LTTE's mid-1990s' military budget "came from overseas sources, including both diaspora contributions and income from international investments and businesses."[916] Overall, the overseas financing for the group, including diaspora remittances, was reported to remain at a high estimated $200 million to $300 million per year for several years prior to its defeat, thus making the LTTE "one of the wealthiest militant organizations in the world."[917] Some suggest that the LTTE often used intimidation to secure at least part of its funds from the Tamil diaspora abroad.[918] Others claim that the intentions behind the overwhelming diaspora support were deeply rooted in the intrinsic popularity of the group, as the following account suggests: "Many Tamils who had suffered or witnessed abuses by Sri Lankan security forces gladly sent funds to support the LTTE's war against the government, viewing the LTTE as a legitimate representative of the Tamil people and their interests."[919]

It is quite probable that during over 25 years of conflict, the popularity of the movement could have diminished. However, even if such a trend was occurring, the following fact still remains: the LTTE did care about obtaining the support of its people throughout the conflict, unlike many African insurgencies. Therefore, one would still expect the group to conduct its child recruitment policy accordingly to make sure the latter does not intervene with the domestic legitimacy of the group. Below is the example that seems to support such a conjecture. As of September 2008, all humanitarian agencies were asked to leave

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[913] Briggs, *Innocents Lost*, op. cit., p. 99.
[914] Ibid., p. 99.
[915] Daniel Byman, Peter Chalk, Bruce Hoffman, William Rosenau and David Branna, "Trends in Outside Support for Insurgent Movements," RAND Corporation Report, 2001, p. 50, http://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph_reports/MR1405/MR1405.ch3.pdf; see also Stewart Bell, "Sri Lanka's Civil War and the Canadian Connection," *The National Post* (Toronto), 3 June 2000, and Stewart Bell, "Groups Act as Fronts for Terror," *The National Post*, 9 December 2000, http://www.canada.com/nationalpost/index.html, cited in Hogg, "Sri Lanka," p. 8.
[916] Peter Chalk, "Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam's (LTTE) International Organization and Operations – A Preliminary Analysis," Commentary No. 77, Canadian Security Intelligence Service, 17 March 2000, cited in Hogg, "Sri Lanka," p. 7.
[917] Bajoria, "The Sri Lankan Conflict," op. cit.
[918] Ibid. These "tactics include telling expatriates to contribute funds to protect the safety of family members back in Sri Lanka, as well as kidnapping affluent Tamils in Sri Lanka for ransoms secured overseas. Members of the Tamil community abroad say the culture of fear that surrounds such tactics is enough to coerce them to fund the LTTE" (Ibid.).
[919] Chalk, "Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam's (LTTE) International Organization and Operations – A Preliminary Analysis," cited in Hogg, "Sri Lanka," p. 7.

Sri Lanka, including the ones who set up a monitoring framework to name and shame the LTTE voluntary child soldier practices. Since the withdrawal of the external watchdog, however, government agencies on the ground reported that the LTTE "has not massively expanded its underage recruitment policies out of fear of losing public support from the local population."[920]

Assessment of Predictive Variables

In the previous section I established that the popularity of the LTTE armed faction was very high. Therefore, according to my theoretical framework, the recruitment of children for the group is expected to be predicted by the *ethnic persecution* variable. Ethnic persecution in my model stands for the concept of extreme insecurity in the country. In this section I show how ethnic tensions between the predominantly Sinhalese government of Sri Lanka and the Tamil people of Eelam led to the sense of insecurity among Tamil adults and youth. I then demonstrate that his was further associated with largely voluntary participation of children in the LTTE.

Ethnic persecution

The root of the conflict in Sri Lanka was ethnically based. The LTTE apparently provoked in 1983 the anti-Tamil violence in the south on an unprecedented scale, after the newly formed insurgency ambushed and killed 13 government soldiers near the northern peninsula of Jaffna.[921] Ethnic persecutions and ethnic violence were attributed to both parties of the conflict responsible for deliberate killings of civilians or their disappearances.[922] Many Tamils "experienced or witnessed abuses by government forces" and those suspected of involvement with the LTTE were extrajudicially executed, "disappeared," and were "tortured by the security forces."[923] The Tamil youths have been specifically targeted by the Sinhala security forces. They were often detained for interrogation, torture, execution, or even rape. During the so-called 'Operation Liberation' in 1987, youths were either summarily shot or shipped off in chains to the Booza camp in the south by the army.[924]

The LTTE also contributed to the feeling of insecurity among its own people by killing those suspected of being informers or considered to be "traitors."[925] This behavior and thus insecurity situation for Tamil people was further exacerbated after the Karuna split within the LTTE in March-April 2004. After its disbandment, remaining elements of the Karuna group have continually ambushed and attacked

[920] Human Rights Watch communication with UN protection official, November 19, 2008, cited in Human Right Watch, *Trapped and Mistreated: LTTE Abuses against Civilians in the Vanni* (HRW: New York, 2008), p. 6.
[921] Hogg, "Sri Lanka," p. 2.
[922] Ibid., p. 2.
[923] Ibid., p. 2. The LTTE also "engaged in retaliatory killings of Sinhalese and Muslim civilians (Ibid.).
[924] Gray and Matchin, "Children: The New Face of Terrorism," p. 110, citing Somasundaram, 2002.
[925] Hogg, "Sri Lanka," p. 3, citing *Amnesty International Reports* 1996 to 2002.

the LTTE and those affiliated with it. The LTTE has sought to regain control of the east through a violent crackdown, not just on Karuna supporters, but on any dissent within the Tamil community.[926]

Overall security in the country also deteriorated because both the army and the LTTE "failed to take adequate measures to avoid civilian casualties."[927] Thus, in the course of the conflict, Sri Lankan government forces reportedly engaged in a pattern of indiscriminate military campaigns, involving aerial and artillery bombardment of areas populated by civilians, "shelling, helicopter strafing, round ups, cordon and search operations, destruction, mass arrests, detention, shootings, grenade explosions, and landmines."[928]

Overall, it can be argued that the situation of insecurity in Sri Lanka, driven primarily by ethnic tensions between the government and the LTTE, as well as on ideological motifs within the LTTE itself, was quite high. Therefore, one might expect that this insecurity might have produced numbers of child soldiers who joined the LTTE for defense purposes. In the next section I first show that child recruitment by the LTTE was a frequent phenomenon throughout the war. Then I show that most of the recruitment was voluntary, thus supporting the underlying proposition of my argument that popular groups would most likely not use coercion. At the end I establish that the voluntary recruitment was driven primarily by feelings of insecurity, as opposed to other factors which might influence a decision of an individual to join, and thus was acceptable among the community so that domestic legitimacy of the group was not compromised.

Child Recruitment

The LTTE has recruited and used children as soldiers throughout the Sri Lankan civil war.[929] "Government soldiers have often described how they were forced to confront LTTE battalions of women, teenage girls, and boys as young as 10 years old."[930] Sri Lankan government authorities estimate that "at least 60 per cent of LTTE fighters are below the age of 18.[931] Estimates of LTTE cadres killed in combat revealed that during the height of the Eelam Wars "at least 40 per cent of the fighting force consisted of girls and boys between the ages of 9 and 18."[932] Thus, the cited percentages vary from 40 to 60 percent,

[926] Hogg, "Sri Lanka," p. 4. There are allegations by the LTTE that Karuna is funded and supported by the Sri Lankan government. If these allegations are correct, the group becomes a paramilitary organization affiliated with the government but, unlike the latter, with freer hands to commit human rights violations. Similar situation can be observed in the situation of Colombia, as my plausibility probe case study analysis further demonstrates.
[927] Hogg, "Sri Lanka," p. 3.
[928] Hogg, "Sri Lanka," p. 3, citing *Human Rights Watch Report 1995*, and Gray and Matchin, "Children: The New Face of Terrorism," op. cit., p. 110, citing Somasundaram, 2002.
[929] Hogg, "Sri Lanka," p. 10, citing Amnesty International, *Children in South Asia –Securing their rights* (AI Index: ASA 04/001/1998), 22 April 1998.
[930] CSUCS, *Asia Report*, July 2000, citing Rädda Barnen, *Children of War Newsletter*, No. 1/98.
[931] Hogg, "Sri Lanka," p. 10, citing Second periodic report of Sri Lanka to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, UN Doc. CRC/C/70/Add.17, 19 November 2002, para. 170, http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf.
[932] Hogg, "Sri Lanka," p. 10.

and can be considered as rather 'high'. The average age of children at the time of recruitment into the LTTE was 15.37. According to estimates by UNICEF, as of 30 April 2006, at least 1,440 cases of child recruitment were still outstanding with the LTTE. Out of these, 859 children were under-age at the time of recruitment but subsequently turned 18 years of age.[933]

The prevailing form of the LTTE's child recruitment was voluntary. Although reports of forced recruitment by the group have surfaced, voluntary enlistment by Tamils in the LTTE was believed to be "common."[934] The LTTE itself claimed its young recruits were volunteers and that "it would be unthinkable to refuse their desire to combat Sinhala imperialism which is the concern of all Tamils."[935] Similarly, the group has denied the presence of forced recruitment of children into its ranks.[936] In a meeting with Human Rights Watch, the secretary-general of the LTTE's political wing, S.P. Tamilselvan, referred to child soldiers and claimed that the group did "not have such a phenomenon," and "that the LTTE did not practice forced recruitment of children."[937] According to Tamilselvan, the LTTE "rejects the term of forced recruitment" and "nobody forces" children.[938]

While denial of the practice by an armed group, especially the one that is conscious about its domestic image, might not represent the actual situation on the ground, the general reports on the LTTE do not emphasize forced recruitment practices by the group. The instances of forced recruitment that have been reported were mostly claimed to take the form of threats to the family, as opposed to blatant abductions, although the latter has also been alleged occasionally. A "one family one child" policy was introduced by the group in some regions during certain times, upon which "the LTTE has pressured Tamil families to provide a son or daughter for "the cause." If a family resisted, they were often subject to threats and harassment. In many cases, a child was eventually taken by force."[939]

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[933] Hogg, "Sri Lanka," p. 10, citing Under-age Recruitment as of 30 April 2006, monthly statistics provided by UNICEF Sri Lanka.
[934] DIRB, 26 June 1997, cited in War Resisters' International, "Sri Lanka," 25/07/1998.
[935] "The secretary-general of the LTTE's peace secretariat, S. Puleedevan, told Human Rights Watch that the LTTE is "working very hard on this issue," and denied that the LTTE practices forced recruitment" (Human Rights Watch, *Living in Fear: Child Soldiers and the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka* (HRW: New York, November 10, 2004), p. 51).
[936] According to the secretary-general of the LTTE's peace secretariat, S. Puleedevan, "there is no threat of forced recruitment. The LTTE is voluntarily giving their service to the people" (HRW, *Living in Fear*, op. cit., p. 51, from the Human Rights Watch interview with S. Puleedevan, Secretary General, LTTE Peace Secretariat, Kilinochchi, August 13, 2004). Puleedevan also mentioned that "there may be some lapses. Some forces may force one or two children, but that doesn't mean that the leadership is giving a green light to do those kind of forcible recruitment cases.... Abduction is marginal" (Ibid.).
[937] HRW, *Living in Fear*, op. cit., p. 51, from the Human Rights Watch interview with S.P. Tamilselvan, General-Secretary of the LTTE political wing, Geneva, October 5, 2004.
[938] Ibid., p. 51.
[939] HRW, *Living in Fear*, op. cit., p. 5.

The only available percentages I could find on relative voluntary and forced LTTE child recruitment were based on the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLMM) reports of 2002.[940] According to these numbers, for example, from February to August "a total of 55 cases of underage recruitment and 43 cases of abduction" by the LTTE were reported.[941] With the prevalence of reports on voluntary recruitment, taking into consideration that abduction cases are the most visible ones in the community and thus most likely overrepresented in this small sample, these numbers still corroborate the general assessment of practitioners that child recruitment in Sri Lanka has mostly a voluntary character.

The fact that the LTTE recruitment of children is mostly voluntary does not tell us anything about the motives of those children and what drives their decisions to enlist with rebels. In this respect, my argument emphasizes the sense of insecurity which makes underage recruits join the group. The following accounts that I identified in the secondary sources tend to support my hypothesis that the overall state of insecurity, described above and related to ethnic persecutions of Tamils and indiscriminate war tactics of the government and rebels, was high enough for people to consider joining the insurgency as the preferred option of self-defense.

For example, one study of the LTTE child recruitment suggests that the ethnic and indiscriminate military targeting of Tamils "has only emboldened children as well as young adults to fight back."[942] To the authors of that study it is no doubt that "the psychological effect that all of these events can have on a child is insurmountable" and that children will seek protection when in such danger.[943] The LTTE's propaganda campaign was also a contributing factor. It "helped create an environment where children feel safe against the attacks by Sinhala security forces. […] it is no wonder, after examining the actions and attacks by the Sinhala government and security forces, that for almost the past three decades children would choose to join the ranks of groups such as the LTTE."[944]

According to the Human Rights Watch, "children who witnessed or suffered abuses by Sri Lankan security forces often felt driven to join the LTTE."[945] Meanwhile, as a 1993 study of adolescents in Vaddukoddai in the island's northern part found, "one quarter of the children studied had witnessed violence personally. […] In response, many children joined the LTTE, seeking to protect their families or

[940] "The Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLMM) is an autonomous international organization, established by the two Parties to the Sri Lanka Ceasefire Agreement (CFA) of 2002, as an impartial instrument to monitor the agreement. The SLMM was set up as a civilian mission jointly financed and staffed by the five Nordic countries. The operation ceased in January 2008 and the administrative termination of the organization is scheduled for completion in mid-2009" (SLMM Official Website, URL: http://www.slmm.info/).
[941] "Child Soldiers: CRC Country Briefs," Pre-Sessional Working Group 33rd session, February 3-7, 2003, p. 23.
[942] Gray and Matchin, "Children: The New Face of Terrorism," op. cit., p. 110.
[943] Ibid., p. 110.
[944] Ibid., p. 110.
[945] HRW*, Living in Fear*, op. cit., p. 5.

to avenge real or perceived abuses."[946] Another work, by proposing the link between feelings of insecurity and enlistment among Tamil people for the LTTE, even questions the importance of the group's popularity levels:

> "The extent of genuine support which the LTTE commands from the civilian population is difficult to assess. There is a correlation between Sri Lankan army excesses in the north and east and increased willingness to show solidarity with the LTTE, especially in the climate of fear which has been accentuated since the November 2005 Presidential elections."[947]

It is possible that in the context of Sri Lanka, ethnic persecution, albeit a significant factor, was not the only driving force for children to enlist. As my empirical work suggested, in the situations of popular armed groups, for example, the control variable of *poverty* from my model might have some, albeit lower, explanatory power for child recruitment. Poverty was mentioned in the literature on Sri Lankan conflict as a potential cause of child recruitment for the LTTE. For example, Gray and Matchin suggest that "the economic conditions in Sri Lanka for some [children] have left no choice but to fight."[948] "According to the Sri Lanka Labor Force Survey taken in 2002, among young people between the age of 15 to 24, 23.8% of males and 34% for females are unemployed."[949] The Human Rights Watch reported that "deprivation, including poverty and lack of vocational and educational opportunities often fueled recruitment" and "enlisting in the LTTE was perceived as a positive alternative to the other options children saw around them."[950]

The potential influence of the *poverty* variable can be inferred from the fact mentioned above that the popular base of the LTTE came from the impoverished Tamil population which suffered the repercussions of the economic reforms in the country in the 1970s.[951] More importantly, though, when commenting on the LTTE's Karuna branch membership, one Sri Lankan citizen told the Guardian correspondent the following: "We have a saying that when a tiger goes hungry he does not eat grass. These people [Karuna Tamil Tigers] were thugs before and they are still thugs."[952] However, without proper knowledge of the LTTE's membership composition based on a survey study and comparative analysis with control sample it is very difficult to say anything definitive about the role that the poverty factor played in the decisions of Tamil children and adults to join the LTTE.

Below I show through two examples that even though both insecurity and poverty affected child enlistment in Sri Lanka, poverty had a weaker explanatory power. First, it has been established by international organizations that most of the LTTE child soldiers originated from the Batticaloa region in

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[946] Ibid., p. 5.
[947] Hogg, "Sri Lanka," p. 9.
[948] Gray and Matchin, "Children: The New Face of Terrorism," p. 110.
[949] Ibid., p. 110.
[950] HRW*, Living in Fear*, op. cit., p. 5.
[951] Hogg, "Sri Lanka," p. 9.
[952] Randeep Ramesh, "Jailed Tamil warlord has deadly influence on election," The Guardian, March 7, 2008.

the east of the country, as opposed to the north where the armed group also had a control over territories. Both explanations of insecurity and poverty seem to fit in this context, but to a different extent. Existing reports on civilian attacks attributed to the Sri Lankan government army demonstrate that most of the attacks between 1984 and 2006 occurred in the eastern Batticaloa region as opposed to northern Jaffna.[953] Thus, the insecurity in the eastern Batticaloa was more evident than in the north. At the same time, Tamil families from the eastern districts tended to be "typically poorer and considered of lower status than Tamils in the North."[954]

The second example further examines the importance of *poverty* as a factor. While it is indeed conceivable that regional poverty levels deteriorated steadily throughout the conflict, the variable cannot explain the observed cyclical variations in child recruitment for the LTTE. The phenomenon of child recruitment fluctuated from year to year, as opposed to moving in one single direction. These fluctuations, in turn, could have been explained by the changing levels of insecurity and scope of ethnic persecution campaigns, as the above mentioned account about "correlation between Sri Lankan army excesses in the north and east and increased willingness to show solidarity with the LTTE" suggested.

The establishment of the link between insecurity or poverty and child enlistment into the LTTE does not exclude the possibility of other factors in predicting child soldering, such as extensive propaganda by the armed group, feelings of patriotism or nationalism, and obsession with the military. However, I regard all these factors as secondary ones to the key factors of security and poverty. Thus, propaganda helps to view the group in a necessary light of a defender. Propaganda aimed at feelings of patriotism or nationalism is primarily targeted at adults. In the presence of their enlistment, it becomes redundant and possibly counterproductive for the group in terms of domestic legitimacy to accept children. Obsession and fascination with the military is tightly linked to the propaganda and popularity of the group, and, as such, bears the same secondary role in motivating children to join the LTTE and insurgents in general.[955]

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In sum, the plausibility probe of my argument on the Sri Lankan case supports my explanatory framework. Thus, in the case of the highly popular LTTE armed group, child recruitment was driven primarily by the feelings of insecurity generated by *ethnic persecutions* and ethnic targeting by both

[953] World Health Organization, "Sri Lanka Situation Report, 2007," URL: http://www.searo.who.int/LinkFiles/Sri_Lanka_SLR-ESR_14-26Jan07.pdf
[954] Human Rights Watch, *Living in Fear*, November 10, 2004.
[955] According to the Human Rights Watch, "sophisticated LTTE propaganda machine regularly exposed Tamil children throughout the North and East to special events honoring LTTE heroes, parades of LTTE cadres, public displays of war paraphernalia, and speeches and videos, particularly in the schools. Families of LTTE heroes were afforded special respect, and children were drawn to the status and glamour of serving as cadres" (HRW, *Living in Fear*,op. cit., p. 5).

government and the rebels themselves. *Poverty* could have potentially contributed to the enlistment of children with the LTTE, albeit not crucially, as accounted for by my theoretical framework.

Section 2: Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC)

Conflict Description

The Colombian conflict with its 42 years of continuous hostilities "is the oldest of the currently ongoing civil wars that is being fought."[956] By the late 1970s, there were about a dozen different guerrilla groups operating in Colombia, each with its own ideology and political and military strategies, but all seeking to overthrow what they referred to as a "closed and unrepresentative political system dominated by the traditional oligarchy"[957] or, put similarly by other accounts, fighting against "wealthy landowners and a conservative government."[958] The most prominent among those and the only ones that remained active until the present time have been the FARC and the ELN.[959] In defense against these leftist guerillas, "businessmen, property owners, and sympathetic army commanders" created the AUC (Autodefensas Unidas del Sur del Casanare, or United Self-defence Forces of Colombia), a right-wing coalition of paramilitary groups allied with the state.[960] Until recent demobilization of the AUC and a peace agreement with the ELN, Colombian government forces were fighting both the ELN and the FARC, "with the unofficial support of the paramilitary AUC."[961]

FARC was founded in 1966 as "the only peasant-based guerrilla movement."[962] At its earlier stages of existence it embraced the Soviet-style Marxist-Leninist ideological orientation and relied on the Communist Party for its arms supplies and financial assistance.[963] In 1988, the FARC was the largest of Colombia's guerrilla groups.[964] In contrast, ELN was created by a group of students that had returned from Cuba. After taking the town of Simacota in 1964, the organization stated its goal, which at the time was to bring down the government. ELN and FARC, although mostly fighting the government separately,

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[956] Uppsala/PRIO Conflict Database, "Colombia."

[957] Ibid. The weak Colombian state, furthermore, paved the way during the 1970s for self-defence groups coming into existence as private armies for rich landowners and drug lords. During the following decades lucrative drug trafficking and business kidnappings made these paramilitary forces increasingly independent. In 1997 the United Self-defence Forces of Colombia (AUC) was formed as an umbrella organisation for several local paramilitary groups active throughout Colombia.

[958] Briggs, *Innocents Lost*, p. 41.

[959] A somewhat less known and weaker EPL (People's Liberation Army) "has also been active as late as in 2004" (Uppsala/PRIO Conflict Database, "Colombia").

[960] Briggs, *Innocents Lost*, p. 42.

[961] Briggs, *Innocents Lost*, p. 42.

[962] Uppsala/PRIO Conflict Database, "Colombia." Some guerrilla activities related to a stated incompatibility between FARC and the government took place since 1964 under the name of 'Bloque Guerrillero Sur' (Ibid.)

[963] *On War Project* Conflict Database.

[964] Uppsala/PRIO Conflict Database, "Colombia." "The height of the FARC's early phase of operations came shortly after its founding, between 1966 and 1968." After it appeared "incapable of mounting sustained operations" for a short time in early 1970s, the group "enjoyed a resurgence during the late 1970s and 1980s." "In September 1980, the organization was regarded as the strongest of the guerrilla groups" and remained so until late 1980s" (On War Project, "FARC Insurgency in Colombia 1968-Present," Armed Conflicts Event Online Database).

have sometimes coordinated their activities, especially in combat against the paramilitaries, but they have also clashed "on occasions."[965]

There were several attempts to negotiate peace in Colombia, but most of them failed to strike a deal with the rebels. While another armed group, the EPL, negotiated an agreement with the government in 1991, the FARC and the ELN failed to do so at that time or during the subsequent peace talks between 1998-2002.[966] The conflict claimed over 45,000 lives since its start.[967] It was also infamous for "disappearances." About two million people have been displaced and three million children had no access to educational opportunities at the beginning of the new millennium.[968] In 2004 the United Nations described the situation in Colombia as "the largest human rights crisis in the Western Hemisphere."[969]

Group Popularity

FARC can be regarded as a widely popular armed movement in Colombia. As I show below, three major factors can be identified as determining the high popularity level of the group: its appeals to popular ideology, its discipline and behavior towards civilians, and the miscalculated policy of the government towards FARC's support base.

First, in its rhetoric the group claims to be the people's army "fighting on behalf of the common people's economic and political rights."[970] The early membership of the FARC was composed of communist ideologues as well as peasants driven on ideological grounds.[971] In fact, the predecessor of the FARC was a peasant self defense group representing "more of a roaming community" with a family structure "than a guerrilla proper."[972] These historically popular origins of the movement are represented today by the large percentage of female members in the organizational structure of FARC: between 20 and 30% of FARC members are reported to be women.[973] Similarly to the Sri Lankan LTTE, the FARC's popularity among the people was high enough to have attracted many women on a voluntary basis.

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[965] Uppsala/PRIO Conflict Database, "Colombia."
[966] For a detailed description of these peace talks and why they failed see Uppsala/PRIO Conflict Database, "Colombia."
[967] Uppsala/PRIO Conflict Database, "Colombia."
[968] Jimmie Briggs, *Innocents Lost*, p. 41.
[969] Ibid., p. 41.
[970] Jimmie Briggs, *Innocents Lost*, p. X.
[971] On War Project Conflict Database
[972] Francisco Gutiérrez Sanín, "Organizing Minors," Working Paper presented at the Conference "Building Knowledge about Children in Armed Conflict," University of Pittsburgh, September 2006, p. 11 These were communities "initially composed by Liberal families that escaped the Conservative government harassment and fell under communist influence." "They were an association of households, with women dedicated to domestic labor, men switching between cultivating the land and fighting, and children being reared in the meantime. Some participated in combat21. The familial structure was technically not sustainable, and when the FARC was formally created in 1966 it had already become much more guerrilla-type."
[973] Gutiérrez Sanín, "Organizing Minors," p. 12.

Towards the end of the 1970s and continuing throughout the following decade the FARC was "protecting and taxing" drug crops grown by low-income Colombian farmers in its areas of influence.[974] This strategy created a relatively solid support base for the group both in terms of finances and, later on, recruits. As the ranks of party ideologists in the group somewhat thinned after the decline of the Patriotic Union or La Unión Patriótica (UP), towards 1990 the FARC's newest recruits began to come increasingly from drug growing Colombian peasants.[975] Overall, FARC's civilian base has been concentrated in its zone of influence and territorial control in southeastern Colombia.

Second, unlike many armed groups in Africa, which claim to be fighting for their people but in reality abuse the very constituency to whom they swear their allegiance, FARC's treatment of civilians largely corresponds with a revolutionary movement image. According to the Human Rights Watch, the FARC "prohibits unruly conduct by its fighters, especially when they are among the civilian population" and "robbery, extortion, threats, sexual abuse, and the irresponsible use of firearms can be capital offences" punished with the death penalty.[976]

It is sometimes claimed that after the group engaged in extortions from kidnappings as one of the means to generate finances, its popular support in Colombia diminished. Several anti-FARC demonstrations took place in larger cities along with blogs appearing online chastising the group's practices. However, in reality the latter strategy, aimed at rich people, urban dwellers, and foreigners – all capable of paying ransom – did not seem to affect the attitudes of the group's core support base represented by a different population strata of farmers not targeted for kidnappings. In fact, the material rise of the FARC due to taxing of coca leaf buyers (but not producers) and kidnappings coexisted with the considerable support of the movement from the civilian population.[977] According to James Brittain, "no better example of the growing support for the FARC–EP exists than the number of rural inhabitants entering the FARC–EP maintained demilitarized zone (DMZ), acquired by the insurgency during the peace talks [1998-2002]. The DMZ, prior to (official) FARC–EP consolidation, had a population of only about 100,000 inhabitants. By the time the Colombian government invaded the region and ended the peace negotiations there were roughly 740,000 Colombians who had migrated to the guerrilla-held territory."[978]

Over the past several years, an increasing number of rural dwellers have begun to migrate to FARC–EP inhabited regions, be it for protection or solidarity. During peace negotiations between the insurgency

[974] This strategy of the armed group coincided with extorting regional landowning elites and newly emerging druglords.
[975] James J. Brittain, "The FARC-EP in Colombia: A Revolutionary Exception in an Age of Imperialist Expansion," *Monthly Review*, Volume 57, Number 4, September 2005, URL: http://www.monthlyreview.org/0905brittain.htm..
[976] Human Rights Watch, *You'll Learn Not to Cry: Child Soldiers in Colombia* (HRW: New York, 2004), p. 69.
[977] Brittain, "The FARC-EP in Colombia."
[978] Ibid.

and the Colombian government (1998–2002), over 20,000 people migrated to the FARC/EP-held Villa Nueva Colombia in one year alone. Many preferred to live in the rebel safe haven since it provided a sense of security and the ability to create alternative community-based development projects.

The strength of the existing popular support for the FARC is substantial, as the following examples demonstrate. Despite the absence of forced recruitment or material compensation in the form of any salaries to its fighters, the group yearly attracts between 3,000-5,000 highly committed members.[979] In addition FARC was said to have "several thousand more supporters, mostly in rural areas."[980] Moreover, "the guerrilla recruiters boast that they can allow themselves the luxury of selecting among the hundreds of applications they get."[981] Taking into consideration a very strict disciplinary code of the group, which includes prohibition of seeing family and, more importantly, a non-negotiable ban on leaving the group after joining, the participation in the group is highly ideological and must be based on a very high level of popular support for the group, albeit within a relatively narrow social stratum.

Third, during the conflict the government took certain miscalculated policy steps to undermine the support base of FARC, which, in fact, led to a stronger sentiment for the group and an increase in its membership. Between 1978 and 1982 the Colombian government adopted abusive measures in prosecution of rebels and their suspected collaborators. While FARC itself was not the most affected guerrilla force at this point in time, it gained new recruits. Then, during the 1980s, the CIA provided secret support for illegal paramilitary groups in Colombia to seek control over the drug business and peasant drug growers. The FARC claimed that this tactic failed, as surviving guerrilla sympathizers would have become FARC members to protect their lives. More recruits also joined after the creation of the Patriotic Union (UP) and subsequent violent persecution of its members by druglords, paramilitary forces and members of Colombian Army and Police.

In late 1990s and early 2000 Plan Colombia (1999) and Plan Patriota (2004) were initiated by the state military with the support of U.S. government funds to impede coca cultivation while providing development for rural economic alternatives to the drug trade. It has been announced by the Colombian government that it extended its presence throughout the country and pushed FARC fighters into retreat.[982] Both plans, however, are said to have failed in destroying the rebels, who regrouped for further offensives, and in undermining the FARC support base, which, in fact, only intensified, according to

[979] Ibid., p. 12.
[980] Global Security Database, "Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC)," URL: http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/para/farc.htm.
[981] Ferro and Uribe, 2002, cited in Gutiérrez Sanín, "Organizing Minors," p. 17. According to Gutiérrez Sanín, it "sounds exaggerated, but not plainly absurd, at least in some regions."
[982] Brittain, "The FARC-EP in Colombia," op. cit.

some observers.[983] Many say that "eradication actually has alienated cocaleros from the military, and has motivated them to deny intelligence on the FARC to government operatives."[984]

Assessment of Predictive Variables

Overall, it can be concluded that the FARC of Colombia has been a popular movement, similar to the LTTE case study. Therefore, according to my theoretical framework, the recruitment of children for the group is expected to be predicted primarily by the *ethnic persecution* variable. However, in contrast to the LTTE case, ethnic persecution was not an issue in the context of the Colombian conflict. Moreover, even if one treats ethnic persecution in my model as a very specific and limited operationalization of the concept of extreme insecurity in the country, there were no other significant concerns for the physical security of any segment of the Colombian society, except for wealthy people outside of the scope of potential guerilla supporters.

Ethnic Persecution and Other Sources of Insecurity in the Country

There are no ethnic or religious divisions within the Colombian society. Therefore, ethnic or religious violence and persecutions could not be a factor in the context of this conflict. The major societal division was along economic classes whose division lay at the roots of the Colombian conflict. Therefore, the persecutions can relate to the targeting of the political supporters of the FARC's communist ideology – those being either Communist party members not affiliated directly with the armed movement or civilian supporters and sympathizers who contribute to the group directly by providing funding and recruits. As has been mentioned above, the members of the UP party in Colombia were once targets of violent persecution by the Colombian government and paramilitaries. That policy, in fact, led to a certain but not significant increase in the ranks of the FARC. This was due to the fact that the UP was mostly based and targeted in the cities, not in the rural areas with the group's overwhelming presence. Thus, this political targeting in the cities was not likely to generate the overwhelming insecurity situation in the region of the insurgency operation similar to the scale observed in the Sri Lanka in the LTTE controlled areas.

As to the actual support base of civilians in the FARC controlled areas, the government of Colombia has not seemed to crack down with severe violence on the coca farmers even during the Plan Colombian and Plan Patriota campaigns. The latter were effectively oriented at the change of practices in terms of growing coca, as opposed to arresting or interrogating or persecuting the suspected FARC supporters. While some violence was recorded against these groups committed by paramilitaries, overall the communities under FARC control were well protected throughout the war. The fact that fewer people died in the Colombian 40-year old war than in Sri-Lankan 25-year armed struggle despite the fact that the

[983] Ibid.

[984] Vanda Felbab-Brown, "Target the Drug Lords in Afghanistan, Not the Farmers," Brookings Institution official website, December 14, 2009, URL: http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2009/0715_counternarcotics_felbabbrown.aspx

Colombian war intensity was higher than that of the Sri Lanka, indicates that Colombian civilians were more secure and fewer of them perished as a result of combat and non-combat related deaths. Thus, the physical insecurity so widespread in Sri Lanka, was not occurring at a comparable level in Colombia.

After establishing that ethnic persecution, unlike other sources of insecurity in the country, was, in fact, low, my explanatory framework predicts low levels of child soldier enlistment into FARC. As I show below, the low value of ethnic persecution in Colombia helps explain lower levels of child recruitment for FARC compared with the LTTE. However, the ethnic persecution factor alone cannot explain the absence or presence of child recruitment practice. Thus, despite the fact that ethnic persecution in the country was low, FARC still had a certain percentage of children in its ranks, albeit much lower than in the LTTE. Therefore, in this section I assess other potential factors besides low level of ethnic persecution, or even levels of insecurity in general, that could possibly account for the fact that a certain low level of child enlistment was occurring in case of the FARC.

Child Recruitment

According to the Human Rights Watch 2003 report, "a conservative estimate would put the proportion of children in the FARC-EP at between 20 and 30 percent."[985] This corresponds to 3,300 and 4,950 child soldiers out of the overall number of about 16,500 FARC fighters as of 2004.[986] This percentage is confirmed to a certain degree by field statistics. In two recorded battles where FARC children were killed or captured, the distribution of child to adult combatants was 10% and 50%.[987] According to another estimate, children might have constituted up to 40% of the FARC armed forces in 2002.[988] In absolute terms, all these percentages may not appear as the ones to be labeled as 'low'. However, the range between and estimate of 20-30% and 40% is comparatively lower than the ones identified for the LTTE armed group (40-60% range), likely to reach almost the double of FARC's.

Similarly to the Sri Lankan conflict, most of the FARC recruitment has been voluntary, according to Human Rights Watch.[989] Thus, it is claimed that "nearly 83 percent of children who enlist in the illegal armed groups [including FARC] do so voluntarily."[990] The FARC leaders themselves "provide a very reasonable explanation for their attachment to "free will": an unwilling soldier is bound to shoot his/her superiors in their backs, and has the ideal conditions to do so in an irregular war."[991] In the reduced

[985] HRW, *You'll Learn Not to Cry*, op. cit., p. 24. See also Human Rights Watch. "Colombia: Armed Groups Send Children to War," February 22, 2005.
[986] Ibid, p. 24.
[987] Briggs, *Innocents Lost*, p. 43-44.
[988] Gutiérrez Sanín, "Organizing Minors," p. 12. This estimate is based on a sample of 2110 minors that were captured or deserted from Colombian guerrilla groups and paramilitaries between 1999 and 2004.
[989] HRW, *You'll Learn Not to Cry*, op. cit., p. 29.
[990] Beatriz Linares, Office of the People's Advocates, cited in Briggs, *Innocents Lost*, p. 43.
[991] Gutiérrez Sanín, "Organizing Minors," p. 22, citing Ferro and Uribe, 2002.

sample of demobilized youth mentioned above, children who joined voluntarily also constituted 80% of all 316 respondents.[992]

As I established in the previous section, the level of *ethnic persecution* variable for FARC in Colombian context was low. According to my theory, it predicts low levels of child recruitment by this popular movement, especially compared to the LTTE. While the observed low levels of child recruitment in the FARC, relative to the LTTE, confirm my theory, it remains unclear what explains the presence of some child soldiers in the ranks of the FARC in the first place. In other words, why do we see those 20%, 30% or, even 40%, of children enlisted into the group?

In my large-*N* analysis I used the indicator of *ethnic persecution* in the country as the most extreme existing way of insecurity. As evidence shows, fear of being killed on ethnic grounds makes people join even the perpetrator ranks, in order to trade their life for combat services. Meanwhile, extreme insecurity in a conflict can occur in other forms as well. This can be shown on the example of Colombia itself. Thus, it should be noted that the FARC almost always coexisted "with other warlords and narcotraffickers" in the same regions, making departments like Antioquia, Guaviare and Meta a source of recruits for both the guerrillas and the paramilitary and, "surely, also for the narcos."[993] This suggests that security in the FARC operating regions could have been the worst one relative to other regions due to competing armed groups and paramilitaries.

Therefore, although the value of the *ethnic persecution* variable, as the indicator chosen to represent the concept of *extreme insecurity* in the country, was low, the motives of self-defense in the situations of extremely insecure environments could have been present could have acted through different channels in the Colombian conflict. Thus, the Colombian case study might point at the fact that while ethnic persecution can be the ultimate expression of insecurity in the country, other security concerns, such as fighting among competing factions, might also generate viable self-defense motives among adults and children alike. At the same time, most conflicts exhibit the level of insecurity related to fighting and armed clashes between the opponents, and yet that type of insecurity does not explain the variance of child soldier recruitment across armed groups.

In addition, some armed groups operating in the contexts of this type of general insecurity do not recruit children. This is because they might not have a demand for combatants to begin with. In the case of the FARC, the *fighting capacity* variable can be regarded as high, because the group has been clashing with the government forces periodically and meets the state army face to face in many battles. Therefore, according to my argument, the demand for soldiers of such an insurgency is high, which opens a channel through which insecure children can flock into the group with the demand for them.

[992] Ibid., p. 27.
[993] Gutiérrez Sanín, "Organizing Minors," p. 25.

The existing survey mentioned above can actually shed the light on whether or not the extreme insecurity, represented by other indicators than ethnic persecution, can have an effect on child recruitment. According to these survey data, only 10% of all predominantly FARC children (83%) in the sample of 316 demobilized child soldiers reported joining out of "fear or vengeance."[994] This category can represent cases such as the following cited in Briggs:

> The foot soldier went to FARC in 1997 after his parents, poor coffee and sugarcane farmers from the Huila department in the country's southeast, were shot to death by right-wing militiamen because his father 'lent a mule to a guerilla.'[995] Seeking vengeance, Luis offered his services to the rebels.[996]

From this particular survey it is clear that although in the Colombian case low insecurity could have led to some child enlistment, it did not fully account for the motivations of all children who joined FARC. It is useful in this regard to refer to the same survey in order to identify what other motivations were given by former child recruits behind their decisions to join FARC.

Thus, three other competing categories in that particular questionnaire, in addition to forced recruitment, were the "false promises (salary, good treatment)" (16%); "conviction" (12%); and "allure of weapons and uniforms" (20%).[997] Neither directly contradicts feelings of insecurity and children could cite all three instead of referring to fear. If they actually stand out as prominent and independent reasons children gave for their enlistment, then it can be said that the *ethnic persecution* factor, or insecurity, in my argument, competes with at least three other potential explanations of child recruitment of popular armed groups.

First, it can be said that *poverty* can account for the 16% of all recruits ("false promises: salary, good treatment"). This does not contradict my argument, as poverty has been proven in my empirical testing to have some predictive power for voluntary child enlistment. While it is known that "the FARC strongholds have been coca growing regions, and/or rich in other natural resources," and therefore "one would expect its peasants to be better off than the rest," the results of the survey still identify the motives of poverty among the most prominent ones.[998] This example stresses the importance of gathering data at the micro individual level, as opposed to macro level, even at the regional and not the national level. At the same time, relatively low levels of poverty in the Colombian context can also be responsible for lower percentages of children in FARC, as opposed to the LTTE. It should be noted here, that unlike FARC, the AUC paramilitary group actually paid its combatants, allegedly a salary between 900,000 and 1,200,000

[994] Gutiérrez Sanín, "Organizing Minors," p. 34.
[995] Brigg, p. 56
[996] Ibid., p. 57.
[997] Gutiérrez Sanín, "Organizing Minors," p. 34.
[998] Ibid., p. 25.

Colombia pesos (approximately US$366 to US$488) each three months.[999] As a result, most of the AUC child soldiers interviewed by HRW "said that money was their primary motivation for joining" the paramilitaries.

The second competing reason from the cited survey is "conviction" (12%). Conviction can be related to what I call popularity in my argument. Thus, as is suggested in my argument, popularity of a group in itself will indeed attract a certain portion of children, similar to the ways it will attract ideologically driven adults, as child agency is assumed and not discounted in this study. However, what this percentage of 12% from the existing survey suggests is that despite the high popularity of the group, "conviction" accounts for the same percentage of children's reasons as the variables of poverty and insecurity, both of which in the Colombian context score very low. This relative distribution of percentages might suggest that the importance of poverty and insecurity in children's decisions to enlist into armed groups is, in general, much higher than that one of group's popularity. As is shown in the FARC's example, only 12% of children reported fascination with the group's goals as the reason for joining, despite the fact that FARC experienced very high levels of popularity among certain segments of society.

The third competing reason is the one called "allure of weapons and uniforms" (20%). This is something that would be tempting to call a discounted factor – i.e. something that would generate a certain amount of child soldiers in any conflict, because weapons and uniforms are present in every armed struggle. Nevertheless, some conflicts have practically no child soldiers involved in them. Hence, it might be the case that "allure of weapons and uniforms" does not necessarily motivate children in every militarized context in the same way, but perhaps more strongly in those where outside options are very poor.

For example, in Colombia a large percentage of youth has difficult access to education. While my data do not reveal whether those most affected were, in fact, residing in the FARC controlled areas or elsewhere, at the national level the statistics report that three million Colombian children aged 11 to 17 in 2004 did not have access to educational opportunities.[1000] For comparison purposes, in Colombia there were 524,000 children without access to primary education only, whereas that number in Sri Lanka constituted only 38,000.[1001] Some practitioners claim that "lack of educational opportunities, and lack of jobs in rural and marginal areas" along with "social exclusion and mistreatment" drive children to abandon their homes and seek a better life with the guerillas."[1002] From the sample analysis mentioned above we learn that the average age of entry of FARC child soldiers into the military organization is

[999] Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, "Colombia's War on Children," February 2004, p. 29.
[1000] Ibid., p. 3; Jimmie Briggs, *Innocents Lost*, op. cit., p. 41.
[1001] UNICEF, "Children Out of School," organization official website. In 2008, the overall population in Sri Lanka was 20mn, whereas Colombian one was not much higher – about 40mn people (World Bank, World Development Indicators).
[1002] Beatriz Linares, Office of the People's Advocates, cited in Briggs, *Innocents Lost*, p. 43.

15.93.[1003] By that time one might expect at least 8 years of education completed by a child raised under normal circumstances. However, the average educational attainment for FARC child soldiers was estimated to be only 3.9 years. This fact points at some structural problem within the Colombian society in relation to access to education for children. For someone who finished high school, further opportunities might be quite limited, as the following profile of a 17-18 year old guerilla combatant in Colombia suggests, according to the government:

> The young guy who joins militia [ELN or FARC] in Saravena often doesn't have anything to do. They finish high school at seventeen, eighteen years old, and there's no work or opportunity to continue a career. Often, they are manipulated with power by being given a gun and told, 'You will collect extortion'. A motorcycle is given to them, and they're told to take cut. Then, they may be told to attack an installation.[1004] No social spending in the region by the government, no education, no opportunities.[1005]

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The plausibility probe of my argument in the Colombian context supports my argument to the extent that the *ethnic persecution* variable can explain the difference across two armed groups in terms of their child recruitment practices. Thus, a lower degree of insecurity among Sri Lankan civilian population accounted for higher child soldier rates in the LTTE than in FARC. Low insecurity levels in Colombia diminished the necessity of children to join the guerilla for protection reasons. Similarly, in the absence of such a motive, FARC could not enlist too many children without violating its public image. Thus, the levels of child recruitment in FARC were lower than those of a comparable (in terms of popularity) Asian armed group of the LTTE.

The Colombian case study also demonstrated that the factor of *poverty* when expressed in a certain level of child deprivation or severe lack of educational opportunities can contribute to the explanation of the occurrence of child enlistment practice into popular armed groups with the existing demand for fighters. Thus, high rates of children out of school in Colombia, both in absolute and relative terms when compared with Sri Lanka, generated many willing underage recruits for FARC. This Colombian example brings a very important point to the findings of my study. When analyzed on the macro cross-group dataset and assessed with national levels of GDP, the *poverty* factor can only partially reveal the complex picture of the role of deprivation for voluntary enlistment of children in different armed conflicts. The Colombian example also demonstrated, that one of such levels of deprivation worth exploring across different cases is the access of children to educational opportunities, especially in the conflicts where

[1003] Gutiérrez Sanín, "Organizing Minors," p. 18. This figure comes from the "ICBF database of minors that were captured or deserted between 1999 and 2004." Among the more than 1155 FARC entries "there are 166 cases, or 14.4%, that reported having joined when they were under 15. Big and ugly, but it shows that the 15 years old rule is used implicitly or explicitly in practice."
[1004] Interview with government forces Major Castillo by Jremie Briggs, *Innocents Lost*, p. 55.
[1005] Ibid., p. 55.

societies have not collapsed altogether and where some variance in educational and other opportunities for children might still exist, even during the conflict stages.

The section on outliers in Chapter 5 of this dissertation further contributes to the discussion about the importance of alternative measures of impoverishment. In the case of the popular armed group of the TPLF in Ethiopia, the *ethnic persecution* factor could not explain well the presence of child soldiers in the organization's ranks. There I argued, similarly to the case of FARC, that such presence of children could have occurred due to a constellation of inadequate policies of the Ethiopean government towards gender inequality and the TPLF's efforts to provide for equal opportunities for women in the affected areas under rebels' control.

The Colombian case also revealed that popularity of an armed group can be regarded as a sufficient but not a necessary condition for a minimum level of child soldiers present in the group. It is sufficient because when it is present, at least some number of children will get enlisted. It is not necessary, however, because if the group is unpopular, it does not mean it should not have child soldiers. Similarly, we might say that the variable of *poverty*, if measured by *alternative or educational opportunities* for children in the country, can be named as a sufficient but not a necessary condition in explaining child soldier occurrence within popular armed groups. When there are no educational opportunities, children will be joining insurgencies. When schools are functioning, voluntary child recruitment might not shrink though, as other factors, such as the *ethnic persecution*, for instance, can also drive child soldier rates up. This is shown by the example of the LTTE above. Thus, a much better situation in educational opportunities for children in Sri Lanka than in Colombia did not lead to lower levels of child recruitment by the LTTE than in FARC, because Tamil children were joining the group for the reasons of self-defense fearing ethnic persecution from misguided policies of the government and intra-group fighting along ethnic lines. Thus, the presence of other factors in addition to educational opportunities attributed to the enlistment of children in the case of the LTTE.

Summary

The plausibility probes of my argument to the Asian and Latin American contexts largely supported the explanatory framework suggested in my work. Thus, two popular armed movements of LTTE and FARC were proposed to have high and low child soldier rates based on the values of the predictor variable of *ethnic persecution*. Thus, high levels of ethnic insecurity in Sri Lanka led to high levels of child soldiers within the LTTE (about 50%). On the contrary, virtually absent ethnic or other insecurity concerns of civilians in the Colombian context could be responsible for lower child soldier rates within the FARC armed movement (about 30%).

The two plausibility probe case studies also demonstrated that the control variable of *poverty* could be a possible explanation for a certain proportion of the child enlistment. Indeed, the poorer Sri Lankan

northern and eastern regions exhibit higher child soldier recruitment than the coca growing richer Colombian communities. Moreover, poorer regions within Sri Lanka itself experience higher child recruitment rates. The latter, however, coincides with a higher degree of insecurity in the regions of prevalent recruitment. Moreover, in the Sri Lankan context *poverty* did not withstand a test of significance for its explanatory power when confronted with temporal cyclical variation in child recruitment by the LTTE, unlike the insecurity variable of ethnic persecution.

Another important point raised by the plausibility probes is the fact that child recruitment in the FARC armed group was not completely absent, despite the low level of the predictive variable of *ethnic persecution* or insecurity. This implies that other factors can lead to the presence of children in popular armed groups besides *ethnic persecution*.

The impact of educational opportunities may enter indirectly through the *popularity* of the armed group. However, as described in Chapter 3 on the theoretical framework, an armed group's popularity can attract a certain number of highly motivated children to the insurgency ranks along with the ideologically driven adults. This was confirmed in the Colombian case study. In other words, as long as the group is popular, a certain base amount of children will always enlist. However, in itself popularity is not able to explain the difference in child soldier recruitment levels across two different popular groups, as exemplified by FARC and the LTTE. This highlights its importance popularity as a conditioning variable as opposed to an independent factor in my explanatory framework. Thus, the difference seems to be explained by the proposed factor of ethnic persecution, conditional on the group's popularity.

Chapter 9: Conclusions

Summary of Findings

In this dissertation I proposed a new argument for explaining the variance of child soldier recruitment practices across different armed non-state actors in the world. Thus, I argued that first, the recruitment of children was more likely for armed groups whose *fighting capacity* is high. Second, I proposed that armed groups with higher *material capacity* were less likely to have children in their ranks. My third explanation of the child soldier practice suggested that armed groups that operated in conflicts with *ethnic persecution* were more likely to have children in their ranks. In the fourth proposition of my argument I postulated that armed groups with larger *territorial access* were more likely to recruit children.

I further extended my argument by proposing that insurgents differed in their child recruitment decision making process depending on how *popular* they were among the people. Thus, I proposed that *popular armed groups* were more likely to recruit children if their *fighting capacity* was high and if they operated in conflicts where military actors engaged in *ethnic persecution*. *Unpopular groups,* meanwhile, were proposed to have a higher probability to have children if, again, their *fighting capacity* was high, they had more *territory to control and access*, and if they did not offer *material rewards* to their fighters.

This explanatory framework is primarily based on factors that I newly identified – such as *ethnic persecution* in the armed conflict, armed groups' *fighting* and *material capacity*, as well as insurgents' *territorial control* ability at home and abroad. The existing literature on child soldiers has not analyzed these factors as potential explanations of the phenomenon. I subject my argument to empirical testing and conduct large-*N* statistical analysis on a new dataset that I compiled. Systematic empirical examination of proposed theoretical arguments is extremely rare in related existing literature. I complement my empirical analysis with in-depth case study analysis of five Liberian armed factions, and plausibility probes on two insurgencies in Asia and Latin America.

The empirical results from my large-*N* analysis supported my theoretical argument. Thus, armed groups were found to be more likely to recruit children if rebels operated in conflicts with intense battles (possess high *fighting capacity* in my operationalization). This relationship was found to be stronger for *unpopular* rebels. The results also showed that armed groups engaged more intensively in the practice of child recruitment if they operated in conflicts characterized by extremely insecure conditions (situations of *ethnic persecution* in my operationalization), with this effect being larger for *popular* insurgencies. The large-*N* analysis findings also corroborated my proposition that armed groups with *access to larger territories* were more likely to recruit children, especially if rebels' popularity was low.

In my explanatory framework I suggested that armed groups offering *material rewards* to their members were less likely to have children in their ranks, especially for unpopular belligerents. This conjecture was partially supported by the large-*N* data. Only the increase in *diaspora support* as one of

the three potential funding sources of rebel organizations was found to reduce the probability of child recruitment, and only for unpopular armed groups, as predicted. When measured by the cumulative index of all three types of material support that unpopular rebels might receive, or by the index of third state support alone, the factor of *material capacity* proved to be a weak predictor of *child soldiering*. If measured as access to natural resources, however, the *material capacity* showed a positive relationship with the dependent variable.

In sum, the empirical tests of my hypotheses revealed that three factors from my argument had the strongest effect on the probability of armed groups to recruit child soldiers: groups' *fighting capacity*, *ethnic persecution* in the country, and groups' *territorial access*. Although insurgents' *material capacity* was also found to affect child recruitment, it did so to a lesser extent and only when measured in diaspora support. Moreover, the findings also demonstrated that all of these factors had different effect magnitude and presence for popular and unpopular armed movements, largely confirming the behavioral patterns proposed in my extended argument. More specifically, *fighting capacity, territorial access* and *material capacity* measured in diaspora support mattered only for unpopular groups. While the role of *fighting capacity* in predicting child recruitment by popular armed groups was not established, *ethnic persecution* did affect child soldier recruitment in the case of popular insurgencies, as predicted.

The results from my case study analysis corroborated my argument and the findings of the large-*N* analysis. In the comparative case study of five Liberian armed factions, the reconstructed values of the four proposed independent variables accurately predicted the categorical values of the dependent variable of child soldier recruitment. Thus, high values on three variables and low *material capacity* in the case of the NPFL and LPC produced high child soldier rates in those two insurgencies. Different variations of medium levels of the predictive variables in the cases of Ulimo-K and Ulimo-J generated medium high and medium low levels of child recruitment in those factions. Low levels of three variables and high level of *material capacity* of the INPFL correlated with fewer child soldiers in the ranks of that group. Moreover, the extended cross-case comparison of these five Liberian armed groups has also established the differences in the predictive power of the four proposed explanatory factors behind child soldier recruitment for popular and unpopular armed groups among them.

One of these Liberian armed groups – the NPFL – represented a unique case in itself: since its *mobilization capacity* was changing over time from very high to very low, it was possible to review the relative predictive power of explanatory factors within this case across time. The temporal case study of the NPFL armed group generated several findings. First, disaggregation of the group's child recruitment by year of conscription revealed spikes in my dependent variable of *child soldiering* in the years of the group's attacks on the capital. While the value of *fighting capacity* remained mostly unchanged over the course of the war, the dates of attacks on the capital, as a result of persistent and high fighting capacity of

the rebel movement, were spread over time. This allowed me to trace the strong effect of *fighting capacity* variable on child soldiers: the NPFL's child recruitment intensified during the years of major battles for Monrovia.

Second, the temporal analysis demonstrated that the variable of *ethnic persecution* also changed over time. Both the policy of the NPFL towards killing rival tribes and the numbers of victims towards the end of the war were abating. Therefore, the variable of *ethnic persecution* could also help explain the observed decreasing trend in the NPFL's child recruitment. Third, the variable of *territorial access* in the case of the NPFL changed in the same direction as the dependent variable, which could have made territorial access responsible for a part of the declining trend.

Not only did the Liberian case study corroborate the findings supported by the large-*N* analysis, it actually also confirmed the potential strength of the *material capacity* variable in the Liberian context – the proposed effect that the statistical analysis on the larger African sample did not detect. Thus, the temporal case study identified a change in the variable of *material capacity* over time, revealing more opportunities to loot for adult combatants towards the end of the war. Therefore, this variable could have explained the decrease in the absolute numbers of children recruited by the NPFL. Moreover, in the largest plundering operation in the capital, in 1996, more adults joined the faction for this lucrative opportunity than ever before. It is in this year that the geography of NPFL's main incidence of child recruitment turned from the countryside to the capital.

The results from the plausibility probes of my argument on two armed movements, in Sri Lanka and Colombia, also demonstrated that my propositions for popular armed groups were well applicable in the contexts of Asia and Latin America. Thus, ethnic persecution and larger insecurity in the north and eastern parts of Sri Lanka, where the LTTE operated, resulted in much higher child enlistment for that group than for the FARC in Colombia operating on the territories where civilians were largely secure and free from ethnic or any other persecutions.

This Colombian example also revealed the effect of one specific indicator of impoverishment – that being *access to educational opportunities*. Thus, extremely low levels of Colombian children's enrollment in schools, meant almost non-existent outside options for the category of youth around 16 years old. The Colombian example also demonstrated, that such alternative measure of poverty and deprivation, such as educational opportunities in a country, should be explored as a separate factor across different cases.

What the plausibility probes also suggested was that, although popularity in itself cannot explain the difference in child recruitment practice across armed groups, it might, in fact, ensure a similar minimum amount of children to be enlisted in any group with similar characteristic. In other words, popular groups, as opposed to unpopular ones, would always have at least a small amount of children in their ranks. The

strict sufficiency but not necessity of this condition for child soldiering did not imply the absence of children in unpopular armed groups. It suggest though that fewer children would enlist into such movements voluntarily, relative to being forcibly recruited.

Both the large-*N* analysis and the case studies demonstrated the lack of an effect of the control variables of *conflict duration* and *conflict intensity*. Analysis of original field surveys of former Liberian child combatants embedded in the temporal case study of the NPFL did not confirm the effects of *poverty* or *orphaning*. *Poverty* was also found to be a weak predictor of child soldiering in the statistical analysis, although it did exhibit some occasional significance for both popular and unpopular armed groups. In the plausibility probe case studies the potential effect of *poverty* was observed but not confirmed as the key one. Also, quite importantly, both statistical and case study analyses showed that the variable of *mobilization capacity* in itself was not an explanatory factor of child recruitment. The effect of *conflict timing* in statistical analysis turned out significant but small relative to any other variable in my model.

Implications for Child Soldiers Studies

In my work I offered a new original test of most of the existing explanations of underage recruitment in the child soldier literature. Thus, the factor of *poverty* exhibited some partial influence on child recruitment, especially for popular armed groups. *Conflict duration*, on the other hand, proved to be less important as it showed no correlation with child soldiering. The *conflict intensity* argument based on battle deaths and the '*orphans argument'* also did not sustain the scrutiny of the empirical test. Thus, my study offered little support to the commonly cited explanations in the child soldier literature. However, my own explanatory framework is primarily based on factors that I newly identify – such as *ethnic persecution* in the armed conflict, an armed group's *fighting capacity* to challenge an opponent, as well as insurgents' *territorial control* ability at home and abroad. Therefore, the biggest implication of my work to conflict studies literature is in suggesting new and very specific variables which sustained the empirical test and proved to explain child recruitment variation across different contexts.

My explanatory framework builds, to some extent, on the existing theoretical approaches, but it departs from them significantly as I offer an original design for empirical analysis. My work advances the literature on the child soldier issue along several dimensions. First, I offer a new theoretical framework for child soldier probability prediction that is directly amenable to empirical analysis and testing. Existing studies that delve into theory building have mostly engaged in model development as a theoretical exercise without any empirical content beyond a few motivating stylized facts. A prominent study in this category is Andvig and Gates (2007) who suggest that interacting supply and demand for combatants create the market situations for theorizing about child recruitment. However, they remain unclear about what specific factors affect demand and supply of combatants.

Another relevant study by Gates (2004) offers a principal-agent model whereby the recruits of a military organization (*the agents*) join voluntarily if they receive sufficient utility, and the leadership (*the principal*) finds a way to reward the soldiers with the lowest financial costs. Again, while providing many interesting insights into the issue, this paper does not offer testable operationalizations of many of the employed concepts. In contrast, the testability and empirical content of my work has enabled me to assess which exact factors out of the potential ones speculated on by the literature actually affect child soldier recruitment and under what type of circumstances.

Second, my work further extends the rare empirical studies on child soldiers. A recent pioneering work by Beber and Blattman (2008), based on the conclusions of a survey-based study of Blattman (2006), found that rebels of the LRA in Northern Uganda were abducting young adolescents for their guerrilla skills perceived as more effective than younger children while more gullible than adults.[1006] My work, in contrast, allows me to distinguish between the impact of explanatory factors among different types of groups, namely popular and unpopular ones, and groups that possess different types of resources with the associated constraints. Moreover, my extensive data set allowed me to perform such an analysis on a large scale using evidence about over a hundred armed groups. Thus, by identifying and operationalizing nuances in the child recruitment process that were unnoted by the previous child soldier literature my analysis explores the issue in more depth and generalizes to a wider scope of cases than considered in previous studies.

Implications for Conflict Studies and International Relations Fields

New Wars and Survival of Military Organizations. My findings have broader implications for the field of conflict studies. One of the most significant findings of my research is that child soldiers appear in greater proportions in more recent wars, but under a certain condition – that is if the new armed movements are unpopular. What it means in reality is that armed groups which previously had little chance of organizational survival are now capable of running their operations and engaging in armed struggle due to child soldier recruitment. Mainstream theories of rebellion postulate that armed groups lacking both material and ideational endowments have a low chance of formation and survival. However, my sample included many of such groups (29% of all African insurgencies) which were active and exhibited high struggle intensity and average duration of hostilities. In fact, out of unpopular groups that Weinstein would predict to be based on material resources, only 50% in my sample actually had material endowments.[1007]

[1006] Blattman, "Causes of Child Soldiering"; Beber and Blattman, "The Industrial Organization of Rebellion."
[1007] Interestingly, this latter finding undermines the claim of economic theories of rebellion, according to which armed groups that lack both material and ideational endowments have a very low chance for survival or even formation.

By compensating for the lack of adult combatants with children, insurgents have a higher chance of survival than predicted by the conflict literature. More importantly, rebels without endowments were more likely to recruit children than most other groups, suggesting a potential effect of child soldier recruitment on insurgency formation, or conflict onset. Based on this finding, in my future research I plan to reexamine and contribute to existing theories on conflict onset and recruitment for armed struggle.

My work also demonstrated that in the past the child soldier practice was not as widespread as in the conflicts of today. What the time dimension captures, however, is the corresponding change in the values of my predictor variables of child soldiering over time. In other words, all four of my independent variables (*fighting capacity*, *material capacity, ethnic persecution* and *territorial access*) were found to increase in their values over time.[1008] Thus, my work contributes to the current research in conflict studies on the specific characteristics that the new armed conflicts possess, besides debatable private loot, lack of popular support and gratuitous violence.[1009]

Funding of Rebel Groups. A series of interesting results from my study are related to the conflict study literature on the link between different types of funding for non-state armed groups and various conflict dynamics variables, such as conflict onset, escalation, duration, and even termination. The first most direct contribution of my study is the notion that the differences in types of material assistance available to armed groups shape the implications of material assistance. Thus, in the context of their effects on child soldier recruitment, all three types of material endowments available to armed groups – i.e. diaspora support, third state assistance, and access to natural resources – exhibited varying degrees of influence on rebel's child recruitment practices. The *material capacity* variable measured in diaspora support had a negative relationship with child soldiering within unpopular armed groups, *third state support* did not yield any significant effect on child soldiering, and access of unpopular rebels to natural resources was associated with more child soldiers.

These diverse results suggest different processes behind reliance on different types of finances for armed groups. This finding highlights the desirability of new investigation in the conflict studies literature to treat the variable of material assistance to rebels as a heterogeneous factor and to disaggregate different types of such assistance. According to Kalyvas, there is currently a gap in the literature in this regard:

> "The demise of the cold war potentially affected the way in which civil wars were fought, if not their frequency. Clearly, the disappearance of external sources of legitimation and funding provided by competing superpowers puts a premium on local resources. Yet, the

[1008] For example, the mean value for the variable of *fighting capacity* for armed groups that operated after 1997 was 0.49 – an increase by 20% from the mean of 0.41 for groups that ceased to exist prior to 1997. Similarly, the mean values of the variable *territory control* by unpopular groups rose from 0.71 to 0.91. *Ethnic persecution* values also increased in case of popular groups from the mean of 0.24 to 0.48 for pre-1997 and post-1997 groups respectively. The variable of *material compensation* also increased over time, from 0.66 to 0.85.
[1009] Stathis N. Kalyvas, "'New' And 'Old' Civil Wars," p. 102.

> exact mechanisms that link funding and war—from diasporas to lootable resources— and how they affect the ways in which civil wars are fought remain inadequately specified."[1010]

My findings about diaspora support and lootable resources shed some light into the logic of such mechanisms. More specifically, one way in which civil wars are fought, that is by recruiting child soldiers, is affected in different ways depending on whether armed groups rely on diaspora remittances or access to natural resources. My empirical research also demonstrated that insurgencies in newer wars rely more on all of these sources of financial support.

The extent to which a monetary component is present in the *material capacity* variable can also differ across different measures of this factor (diaspora support, third state support, or access to natural resources). For example, one interesting finding related to the material component in assistance type was that the *material capacity* variable measured in the *third state support* did not yield any significant effect on child soldiering. This finding could have occurred in my case because states' support comes mainly in the form of military assistance, as opposed to direct funding. This suggests that receiving a third state's military and logistical assistance does not augment rebels' disposable funds to redistribute among group members in the form of salaries. In a sense, the third state support measure is probably the least precise indication of the actual financial solvency of a military organization, compared to the index of access to the easily cashed natural resources or diaspora's direct monetary assistance.

The different redistributive potential of different types of resources has also permeated through my extended argument. Thus, in the case of unpopular armed groups, for which pecuniary rewards were proposed to have a negative effect on *child soldiering*, *material capacity* proved to have a positive effect. A potential explanation of this finding can in itself represent an important and interesting result for the conflict studies literature. More specifically, it is possible that besides generating revenue to armed groups, access to natural resources also affects military organizations by cultivating greed among their leadership personnel. Unlike in the case of diaspora money which ends up in the hands of the highest leadership of the rebel movement, revenue generated from diamond mining or drug production is less prone to hierarchical control. Any low-ranking commander may have access to production, supervision, transportation or looting of natural resources, and thus profit from the commodity in question either openly or clandestinely.

The logic of this argument is reflected to some extent in existing literature on conflict and armed movements. Thus, previous studies have noted the negative impact of rebels' access to revenues from natural resources on the wide-spread private profiteering and trust and discipline within the

[1010] Stathis N. Kalyvas, "'New' And 'Old' Civil Wars," p. 117.

insurgency.[1011] What my investigation suggested, however, and what might be developed further as a potential future contribution to the conflict and natural resources literature, is an alternative description of the underlying mechanisms behind this relationship than the ones described in the existing studies in this context. My research does not support one such mechanism while providing evidence to another. For example, in his book Jeremy Weinstein postulates that armed groups with access to natural resources (resource-based organizations) end up having greedy profiteers (attract opportunists) who care about short-term benefits, not the overall purpose of the organization.[1012] While I also find it plausible, however, unlike Weinstein, I assume that such a pursuit will occur only in unpopular resource-based organizations, and not in the popular ones. Meanwhile, as my data demonstrate, there is no correlation between popularity and *material capacity* (measured by all four different indicators in my analysis).

Another underlying mechanism that my study does support relates to Weinstein's argument, which establishes that military discipline and institutional checks and balances within armed groups not based on ideational endowments are difficult to maintain.[1013] On the contrary, more ideational (or popular) armed groups are more likely to be able to institutionalize the checks and balances on members' behavior and, as a result, the long-term commitment of their fighters.[1014] This proposition is supported by the data in my sample that shows a statistically significant difference between popularity of a group and the strength of its center, measured as a categorical index of the extent to which the top leadership of the movement can control its troops and thus discipline within the organization.[1015]

Yet another consequence of examining the *material capacity* variable in my study was a somewhat controversial finding about *diaspora support*'s potential positive association with *child soldiering* in the case of popular movements. On the one hand, I proposed that additional revenue of unpopular armed groups should increase the capacity of the insurgency to pay and attract adult soldiers who would otherwise not join unpopular movements. On the other hand, for popular movements, my extended theoretical framework did not postulate any influence of the group's material capacity. This outcome may

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[1011] These works focused mostly on diamonds and include United Nations (UN), *Report of the Panel of Experts Appointed Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1306 (2000*), Paragraph 19, in Relation to Sierra Leone (New York: United Nations, 2000); Le Billon, "The Political Ecology of War"; David Keen, *Conflict and Collusion in Sierra Leone* (Oxford, U.K.: James Currey, 2005), cited in Le Billon, "Diamond Wars?" p. 362.
[1012] Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion*, pp. 139, 171.
[1013] Ibid., p. 139.
[1014] Ibid., p. 139.
[1015] Reported p-value of the chi-square coefficient is 0.017. The data to measure the strength of the central leadership were taken form the NSA Project Dataset. "This variable gives a categorical indicator, measured as "high, moderate, or low" of the strength of the leadership's control over its forces. An example of a group with a high degree of control would be the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) in Mexico, where Subcommander Marcos was at the top of a clear chain of command in a well-organized group. An example of a group with low control of its forces is the Rally for Congolese Democracy (RCD) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which did have a central command organizational structure, but was beset by constant fractionalization and leadership disputes" (Cunningham and Gleditsch, "The NSA Project," pp. 5-6.)

result from collinearity of the variable of *ethnic persecution* with *material capacity* measured in diaspora support money. A theoretical argument for such a potential correlation can indeed be found in the literature. As one study on rebel financing suggests, "the increasing number of ethnic or communal insurgencies relative to ideological conflicts increases the relative prevalence of diaspora support."[1016] This is precisely why Latin American military organizations are believed not to receive much diaspora support – that is because ethnic insurgencies "in general are rare" on the continent.[1017] By identifying this relationship, my study thus offers empirical support to the existing theories on the link between diaspora remittances and conflicts.

Transnational Networks. Furthermore, my finding that unpopular armed groups with diaspora support money recruit fewer children has a broader implication for the field of international relations in general. Thus, from the international legitimacy point of view this finding is particularly interesting, as diaspora constituency – one specific example of transnational networks – plays an important role in promoting or prohibiting international norms. Identifying and testing the mechanisms leading from diaspora money to child recruitment forms a part of my future research agenda linked to the study of international norms dynamics, diffusion and socialization, as well as identification of conditions under which armed non-state actors comply with the international humanitarian law.

Refugee Studies. The existing effect of rebels' presence across national borders in refugee camps also has an implication for the international relations literature that links security of refugee camps to conflict. One of the existing mechanisms behind presence or access in the camps and conflict onset or prolongation can thus be recruitment of children as the last resort of the unpopular movements without any material support.

Policy Implications

According to the reevaluation by international activists of strategies for curbing the child soldier practice, they "must take into account that what may be effective in influencing one group may have little impact on another."[1018] My findings fully confirm this statement and offer some insights into the *conditions* under which the current strategies against child recruiters can become effective, as well as suggestions on *prospects* of the success of the policy community.

The first condition that might determine the success of international strategies is the popularity of an armed group. Thus, I argue, it would be hard if not impossible for the international community to influence the behavior of unpopular armed groups recruiting child soldiers who do not manage or are not interested in cultivating the domestic civilian support base. Such groups are not bound by the domestic

[1016] Byman et. al., *Trends in Outside Support for Insurgent Movements*, p. 42.
[1017] Ibid., p. 41.
[1018] CSUCS, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008*, p. 25.

legitimacy concerns and thus naming and shaming strategies, as well as educating the community about illegality of child soldier recruitment, will simply not work in these cases.

Recruitment of children allows for survival of otherwise challenged military organizations as it provides them with the necessary and cheap (or free) recruits. Thus, if an unpopular armed group recruiting children does not depend on third states for material assistance, it would be practically impossible to influence the child recruitment behavior of such a group. Not only would the anti-child soldier recruitment international movements not be able to cement their strategies against the absent domestic legitimacy concept in such cases, they also would not be able to rely on the power of international legitimacy or the leverage of third states, as the links between such armed groups and the international society are minimal. In addition, because child soldier recruitment is, in fact, the crucial strategy without which the group has no ideational or material resources needed for organizational survival, the abandonment of this strategy under the "pressure" of international activists is quite unlikely.

For popular armed groups the prospects for potential success in reducing the child recruitment practice are higher. Popular armed groups are responsive to the attitudes of their domestic support base and can adjust their recruitment policies accordingly. The following example from Sri Lanka mentioned in Chapter 8 with plausibility probes confirms this point. In September 2008 all humanitarian agencies were asked to leave Sri Lanka. Since the withdrawal of child soldier monitoring groups, however, no increase in child recruitment by the LTTE was reported by domestic agencies who cited the group's "fear of losing public support from the local population" as the major reason.[1019]

It is not clear whether international campaigns aimed at educating civilians about the harmfulness of condoning child recruitment will succeed in developing the public opinion along this direction. Consider, for instance, the results of an existing study on the attitudes among the Tamil diaspora in Norway towards child recruitment by the LTTE. While no organization has probably worked with the diaspora on educating them about the illegality of this practice, their exposure to western standards and the physical distance from the conflict did not appear to mitigate their strong ideological support and appreciation of the insurgency despite their demonstrated knowledge of LTTE's child recruitment practices.[1020]

While many unpopular armed groups do not have to rely on material assistance from abroad nowadays in order to sustain their operations, those who actually do recruit fewer children. This finding is very important for the policy community that proposes the undermining of rebel funding as a possible solution to a child soldier problem. In fact, as my findings suggest, such a strategy would be

[1019] Human Rights Watch communication with UN protection official, November 19, 2008, cited in Human Right Watch, *Trapped and Mistreated: LTTE Abuses against Civilians in the Vanni* (HRW: New York, 2008), p. 6.
[1020] Stephanie Therese Lee, "Diaspora Efficacy in Homeland Conflicts: Interpreting the Tamil Diaspora's Inaction on the Child Soldier Issue," MA project in International Relations at the Australian National University and Peace Research Institute of Oslo (PRIO), 2006.

counterproductive to the efforts of international activists, leading to the increase, not decrease, in the numbers of recruited minors.

Overall, my findings suggest a picture for a varying success of the international activists in Africa. This is because about 55% of all African insurgencies recorded in my sample were unpopular and, as I argue, it is hard to influence the recruitment strategy of such armed groups once they are already recruiting children, which 38% of all these unpopular movements did, according to my dataset. More bright prospects, I would argue, exist for activists trying to address the issue of child recruitment by armed non-state actors in Asia and Latin America. As my preliminary research suggests, most of the armed groups in Asia and Latin America are popular. In fact, I could not identify any unpopular movements in these regions for the plausibility probe analysis.

Limitations and Future Research

This work is novel in the sense that it is the first one to my knowledge that performs an empirical analysis of child recruitment across different conflicts. As Blattman, cited above, admits, "Based on data from a single case, these policy implications are best regarded as unproven but testable implications of a general theory of recruitment, to be examined in other contexts."[1021] With the macro nature of its large-*N* empirical analysis, this work offers an original test of my new factors as well as the existing findings from the survey research across different contexts. However, as with every empirical macro work, it may be subject to certain limitations due to the approximation nature of statistical modeling and data collection and coding. Below I will outline several such potential limitations.

It should be noted, however, that the large-*N* empirical analysis in this study is conducted on a sample of African armed groups only. While my argument was largely confirmed in the plausibility probes on an Asian and Latin American armed movements, a definitive answer to my research question would require an empirical analysis of a larger sample that would include all insurgencies in the world, and not only the African ones. I am working on the compilation of such a dataset, and this work is a part of my future research agenda.

One disclaimer should also be made regarding the quality of macro data on child ratios across different armed groups. During my dataset compilation work I did my best in identifying as many sources as possible and obtaining the best estimate out of the available ones in each particular case. However, for the most part, the statistics provided in field reports of practitioners and observers are based on their encounters with some units of rebel organizations. Those encounters vary to a certain degree from being just occasional to deeper familiarizing with insurgents' organizational composition and structure. Thus, the estimates and numbers from those reports are technically not precisely calculated ratios based on the counts of demobilized or registered armed combatants. While in some contexts, like Liberia, for example,

[1021] Blattman, "Causes of Child Soldiering," p. 26.

we do know child to adult ratios on the basis of the post-conflict counts of ex-fighters, such a method of estimation is a relatively rare practice in the existing reports and in general, and is also prone to certain counting errors. For example, the remaining issue with demobilization will always be the number of those soldiers who did not choose to come to the DDR centers to disarm.

Several additional data issues, addressed in Chapter 4 of my work, relate to the definition of *child soldiers*. First, the definition and thus the data collected on child recruitment instances (and the only data available on a large scale suitable for comparison) do not distinguish between the age of recruits, as long as they are under 18 years old. Meanwhile, this benchmark of 18 years old, based on western norms about childhood, often might not translate well to the context of Africa where, according to some, the age of adulthood is often reached much earlier, with some countries specifying it as low as 15 years old. The second possible problem relates to the treatment of child soldiers as a homogenous entity, without distinguishing between combat and logistical tasks of underage recruits.

Another feature of my study which may or may not translate into a limitation is that my measurement of the dependent variable of child soldier does not distinguish between voluntary and forced enrollment methods, again due to data limitations. Compilation of such disaggregated data on methods of recruitment is a part of my future project. It should be noted, however, that a systematic data compilation of this information is very difficult because often armed groups either utilize both methods of recruitment, their mix, or switch from one to another across time.

This brings us to yet another potential limitation of the scope of the current analysis, which I aim to address in my next project. As of now, my dependent variable does not offer a time dimension, as it does not distinguish between child recruitment at different stages of conflict. Meanwhile, the resort to such a practice can occur only at a certain stage of armed conflict or may change in linear or even cyclical trends over time. As I described in Chapter 4 on methodology, I do not anticipate any adverse effects of a potential bias for my current large-*N* analysis in the absence of time series data. Moreover, I include the control variable of *conflict duration* into my large-*N* analysis and examine the temporal development of child recruitment in one of my case studies. Ideally, however, future work on child soldier recruitment should take the notion of timing into account and enrich the analysis by adding a time dimension to it.

Since my work is based to a certain degree on a macro-level large-*N* study, by definition it could have suffered from the ecological fallacy problem. For example, using *ethnic persecution* and *poverty* as factors behind child soldier reasons to enlist assumes that this aggregate measure holds also at the individual level. It should be noted here, however, that I tried to eliminate this concern by offering additional analysis to my study. While keeping those macro level measures to account for the role of individual motivations in the overall model of child soldier predictions (without them the model would be simply incomplete), I also conducted survey analysis on individual former Liberian child-soldiers and

examined existing surveys from other contexts (for example, of the FARC in the plausibility probe) with the goal to diminish this problem. Thus, I verified at the micro-level of individual data that my proposed factor of *ethnic persecution* and *poverty* retain their explanatory power. I also examined if other individual-related factors offered in the child soldier literature but refuted by me for methodological reasons as the possible crucial factors in explaining the variance of practice across different non-state armed groups actually have any significance.

On the basis of my own combined exercise described above, I do believe that the research on the child soldier phenomenon should ideally combine both – surveys and macro studies. This is because any model of child recruitment, including my model, would inevitably include factors reflecting motivations of children and military commanders, which are best identified and tested by conducting micro-analysis through survey research. For example, I examined two factors behind child motivations in my analysis – *insecurity* and *poverty*. This does not necessarily mean that children who enlisted with armed groups might not offer different reasons during surveys, as my plausibility probe case study of the FARC armed group demonstrated. However, in my argument I do claim that *ethnic persecution* and, to a lesser degree, *poverty* are the most crucial motivations that can actually explain the variation in the degree of child enlistment across cases unlike other child motivations cited in the literature and identified in the surveys.

Thus, I suggest that such motives of children as fascination with uniforms and weapons, for example, would be identical for all conflict contexts in which popular armed groups operate. Similarly, motives such as “conviction” should be the same for groups with the same degree of popularity. The advisability and necessity of further survey research is substantiated by other potential concerns of child soldier research in general outlined in this section. Thus, disaggregation of data by age and roles of child recruits might address the existing deficiencies brought about by aggregation in current NGO data collection. Survey data will also pick up the trends in recruitment methods – forced or voluntary – so crucial for the cross-country or cross-group examination of the practice. A time dimension can also be embedded in the survey with a suitable questionnaire design.

APPENDICES

Acronyms and Initialisms Used in the Study

ADF	Ugandan Allied Democratic Forces
AFL	Armed Forces of Liberia
AI	Amnesty International
ALF	Afar Liberation Front (Ethiopia)
CAFF	Children associated with fighting forces
CSUCS	Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers
DDR(R)	Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration (and Rehabilitation)
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
Ecomog	Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group
ELN	National Liberation Army (Colombia)
EPDM	Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement
FARC	Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (Colombia)
FDU	United Democratic Forces (Congo-Brazzaville)
FLEC	Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda (Angola)
FUC	United Front for Change (Chad)
HRW	Human Rights Watch
ICC	International Criminal Court
IDP	Internally Displaced People
ILO	International Labor Office
IO	International Organization
IRC	International Rescue Committee
INPFL	Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia
LDF	Lofa Defence Force
LPC	Liberia Peace Council
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army (Uganda)
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (Sri Lanka)
MFDC	Movement of Democratic Forces in the Casamance (Senegal)
NDA	National Democratic Alliance (Sudan)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
NPFL	National Patriotic Front of Liberia
NPFL-CRC	Central Revolutionary Council of the NPFL
PTSD	Post-traumatic Stress Disorder
RCD-ML	Congolese Rally for Democracy-Liberation Movement
RENAMO	Mozambican National Resistance Movement
RPF	Rwandan Patriotic Front
RUF	Revolutionary United Front

SPLA	Sudan People's Liberation Army
UCK	Kosovo Liberation Army
Ulimo	United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy
Ulimo-J	United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy – Johnson faction
Ulimo-K	United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy – Kromah faction
UNITA	Union for the Total Independence of Angola
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UPDF	Uganda People's Defense Force

Figure 3. Map of Liberia

Source: *Maps of World*, URL: http://www.mapsofworld.com/liberia/liberia-political-map.html

Technical Appendix

Logistic Regression

In a linear multiple regression model the dependent variable (DV) on the left-hand side of the equation is a linear function of the independent variables (IVs) that appear on the right-hand side of the equation. The values of the IVs can theoretically vary over a wide range of numbers and the DV also inherits this property. In contrast, the logistic regression model relates a probability of an event in the DV, such as *child soldiering* in my case, to a set of IVs. A probability can lie only between 0 and 1 while the right-hand side IVs can exhibit a large variation. Hence, the logistic regression is a nonlinear model that transforms potentially wide-ranging values of the IVs into a fixed interval [0,1]. The logistic regression is formally composed of several equations:

(a) Index function:

$$y_i^* = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_{1i} + \ldots + \beta_k x_{ki} + \varepsilon_i$$

where y_i^* is an unobservable linear function of the IVs. In the main text, y_i^* is denoted by $p(cs)^*$.

(b) Observation equation:

$$y_i = \begin{cases} 0 \text{ if } y_i^* < 0 \\ 1 \text{ if } y_i^* \geq 0 \end{cases}$$

which relates the actually observed binary data in y_i to the underlying unobserved continuous variable y_i^*.

(c) Nonlinear transformation:

$$p(y_i = 1) = p(y_i^* \geq 0) = p(\varepsilon_i \geq -[\beta_0 + \beta_1 x_{1i} + \ldots + \beta_k x_{ki}]) = F_\varepsilon(\beta_0 + \beta_1 x_{1i} + \ldots + \beta_k x_{ki})$$

where F_ε is a cumulative distribution function of ε. The distribution function F_ε transforms a continuous variable y_i^* into its probability interval [0,1]. The logistic regression model assumes the specific form

$$F_\varepsilon(y_i^*) = \frac{\exp(y_i^*)}{1 + \exp(y_i^*)}$$

β-coefficients and Marginal Effects

The formal model structure also provides a useful guidance for the interpretations of various quantities involved. From the index function it is apparent that the β-coefficients do not have the same interpretation as in the multiple linear regression model where the β-coefficients measure the constant partial derivatives of the DV with respect to IV. In the logistic regression, the β-coefficients measure the

change in the unobservable continuous index variable y_i^* associated with a change in one of the IVs. This quantity provides useful insights into the system but is typically not the only object of interest. A more useful measure of the analyzed relationship among variables is a so-called *marginal effect* (ME) which evaluates the change of the DV resulting from a (unit) change of the IV. In the case of a continuous IV x_j the ME is defined as

$$ME_j = \frac{\partial p(y_i^* = 1)}{\partial x_{ji}} = \frac{\partial F_\varepsilon(\beta_0 + \beta_1 x_{1i} + \ldots + \beta_k x_{ki})}{\partial x_{ji}} = F_\varepsilon'(\beta_0 + \beta_1 x_{1i} + \ldots + \beta_k x_{ki})\beta_j$$

where F_ε' is the derivative of the distribution function F_ε, while in the case of a discrete IV x_j the ME is defined as

$$ME_j = \frac{\Delta p(y_i^* = 1)}{\Delta x_{ji}}$$
$$= \frac{F_\varepsilon(\beta_0 + \beta_1 x_{1i} + \ldots + \beta_j x_{ji}^{final} + \ldots + \beta_k x_{ki}) - F_\varepsilon(\beta_0 + \beta_1 x_{1i} + \ldots + \beta_j x_{ji}^{initial} \ldots + \beta_k x_{ki})}{x_{ji}^{final} - x_{ji}^{initial}}$$

For a binary variable x_j the marginal effect equals to

$$ME_j = p(y_i^* = 1 | x_{ji}^{final}) - p(y_i^* = 1 | x_{ji}^{initial})$$
$$= F_\varepsilon(\beta_0 + \beta_1 x_{1i} + \ldots + \beta_j x_{ji}^{final} + \ldots + \beta_k x_{ki}) - F_\varepsilon(\beta_0 + \beta_1 x_{1i} + \ldots + \beta_j x_{ji}^{initial} \ldots + \beta_k x_{ki})$$
$$= \frac{\exp(\beta_0 + \beta_1 x_{1i} + \ldots + \beta_j x_{ji}^{final} + \ldots + \beta_k x_{ki})}{1 + (\beta_0 + \beta_1 x_{1i} + \ldots + \beta_j x_{ji}^{final} + \ldots + \beta_k x_{ki})} - \frac{\exp(\beta_0 + \beta_1 x_{1i} + \ldots + \beta_j x_{ji}^{initial} + \ldots + \beta_k x_{ki})}{1 + (\beta_0 + \beta_1 x_{1i} + \ldots + \beta_j x_{ji}^{initial} + \ldots + \beta_k x_{ki})}$$

Note that while the variable x_{ji} is subject to change, all other variables are fixed at a particular value of interest. There is no specific rule on what this value should be. A number of texts recommend the average value for such variables, which is statistically valid even for categorical variables such as dummies. A mean value for dummy variables does not have a direct interpretation but this is not the object to be interpreted. Such a value merely positions the system at its numerical averages to avoid the effects of extremes entering the calculation of the marginal effects on the variable of interest which changes along its natural scale from 0 to 1.

For the continuous IV the marginal effect in the logistic regression measures a quantity that is conceptually equivalent to the β-coefficient in the linear multiple regression model, that is the partial derivative of the DV with respect to the IV. The difference between marginal effects and β-coefficients in logistic regression arises due to the nonlinearity in the functional form of the regression which needs to be taken into account for the differentiation.

Since in the logistic regression the β-coefficients and the marginal effects represent two different quantities, and are calculated in different ways, their pattern of significance may differ. Thus, for example, one can obtain a statistically significant β-coefficient on a certain variable, while the marginal effect of that variable may in fact not be statistically significant. This means that even though the underlying unobserved index variable y_i^* changes significantly with the relevant IV x_j, the resulting change in probabilities $ME_j = p(y_i^* = 1 | x_{ji}^{final}) - p(y_i^* = 1 | x_{ji}^{initial})$ is not significant. For example, this may happen in cases when $p(y_i^* = 1 | x_{ji}^{initial})$ is already quite high (say 0.95) and even a substantial change in x_j will not raise the probability much further. A similar situation may occur for very low values of $p(y_i^* = 1 | x_{ji}^{initial})$.

Table A. Logistic Regressions of Child Recruitment with Interaction Terms w/o Mob*Cap

	5*	6*	7*	8*
Mobilization Capacity				
Fighting Capacity	2.284**	3.184**	2.285**	2.003**
	(0.91)	(1.23)	(0.91)	(0.89)
	9.816	24.143	9.826	7.411
	[1.65; 58.42]	[2.17; 269.02]	[1.65; 58.48]	[1.30; 42.41]
Material Capacity (Index)	-0.708			
	(0.66)			
	0.493			
	[0.14; 1.80]			
Diaspora Money		-3.107**		
		(1.42)		
		0.045		
		[0.00; 0.72]		
Third State Support			-1.233	
			(1.06)	
			0.291	
			[0.04; 2.33]	
Natural Resource Access				1.646*
				(0.910)
				5.186
				[0.87; 30.86]
Ethnic Persecution	0.584	0.238	0.517	-0.284
	(1.05)	(1.39)	(1.00)	(0.99)
	1.793	1.269	1.677	0.753
	[0.23; 14.04]	[0.08; 19.34]	[0.24; 11.91]	[0.11; 5.24]
Territorial Access	2.811***	3.593***	2.825***	1.638*
	(1.04)	(1.22)	(1.00)	(0.84)
	16.627	36.343	16.861	5.145
	[2.17; 127.66]	[3.33; 397.10]	[2.38; 119.70]	[0.99; 26.69]
Interactions:				
Mobilization*Fighting	-0.472	-0.004	0.013	0.211
	(1.17)	(1.30)	(1.18)	(1.19)
	0.624	0.996	1.013	1.235
	[0.06; 6.18]	[0.08; 12.73]	[0.10; 10.23]	[0.12; 12.72]
Mobilization*Ethnic	2.564	0.909	3.339**	4.176***
	(1.64)	(1.88)	(1.52)	(1.60)
	12.988	2.482	28.191	65.105
	[0.52; 323.24]	[0.06; 98.87]	[1.43; 554.57]	[2.83; 1498.17]
Mobilization*Material (index)	0.608			
	(0.83)			
	1.837			
	[0.36; 9.34]			
Mobilization*Diaspora		7.547***		
		(2.30)		
		1895.049		
		[20.88; 171.9K]		
Mobilization*State			-0.492	
			(1.56)	
			0.611	
			[0.03; 13.01]	

Mobilization*Resources				-2.634*
				(1.41)
				0.072
				[0.00; 1.14]
Mobilization*Territory	-1.455	-2.583**	-0.789	0.022
	(1.01)	(1.06)	(0.89)	(0.84)
	0.233	0.076	0.454	1.022
	[0.03; 1.69]	[0.01; 0.60]	[0.08; 2.60]	[0.20; 5.30]
Controls:				
Poverty (log)	-0.904	-1.711**	-0.934	-1.052*
	(0.61)	(0.75)	(0.60)	(0.59)
	0.405	0.181	0.393	0.349
	[0.12; 1.34]	[0.04; 0.79]	[0.12; 1.27]	[0.11; 1.11]
End Before 1997	-2.125**	-2.685***	-2.355***	-1.828**
	(0.83)	(1.01)	(0.87)	(0.76)
	0.119	0.068	0.095	0.161
	[0.02; 0.61]	[0.01; 0.49]	[0.02; 0.52]	[0.04; 0.71]
Conflict Duration				
Conflict Intensity				
Cons	4.156	8.649*	4.065	4.483
	(4.268)	(5.25)	(4.31)	(4.17)
N	80	77	80	80
Pseudo R^2	0.40	0.53	0.42	0.43
_hatsq in linktest	0.453	0.332	0.521	0.999
Log likelh (Prob>chi2=0)	-33	-24	-31	-31
Goodness-of-fit test, p-value				
Hosmer-Lemeshow	0.440	0.618	0.683	0.917
Pearson	0.460	0.722	0.614	0.701
Max VIF	5.38	3.39	4.67	3.70
Min tolerance (1/VIF)	0.19	0.30	0.21	0.27
AIC	87.38	71.00	85.31	83.99

Note: Logistic regression coefficients are marked with * when significant at 10%; ** significant at 5%; *** significant at 1%. Standard errors are reported in parentheses, and below are odds ratios and their 95% confidence intervals (in square brackets).

Table A1. Determination of the Fighting Capacity Values for Five Liberian Armed Groups

Armed Faction	*Military Effectiveness*	*Attacks on Strategic Military Targets*	*Negotiation Position*	*Fighting Capacity*
NPFL	Pushed government forces from the entire Liberia but the capital (successful guerrilla strategy; tribal politics weakens AFL)	4 battles for Monrovia;	Charles Taylor runs in and wins the 1997 elections	HIGH
LPC	Pushed NPFL from half of Taylor's territories (professional soldiers; scorched earth tactics; support from AFL/Ecomog)	No need to attack the capital; attacked NPFL's major base; conquered Buchanan port	Georgy Boley competes in the 1997 national elections	HIGH
Ulimo-K	Directly attacked NPFL but w/o large territorial gains; second front with Ulimo-J (largest arms supplies; extensive training of soldiers; Guinea military help)	Attack on NPFL base with coalition forces	Control of financial sector in the 1995 interim government	MEDIUM HIGH
Ulimo-J	Military clashes with Ulimo-K; Defense of commercial territories	Mostly on defense	Controlled diamond mines w/o much stake in government	MEDIUM LOW
INPFL	Marched through the country uninterrupted w/o many battles; Contained at Caldwell & and used as supplement to Ecomog/AFL	Unsuccessful surgical strike in Monrovia	Did not seek any	LOW

Table A2. Determination of the Material Capacity Values for Five Liberian Armed Groups

Armed Faction	*Material Capability*	*Payment to Soldiers*	*Material Capacity*
NPFL	Concessions from natural resources (logging, rubber, iron ore, diamonds, barter trade)	Combat soldiers are not paid; Looting is restricted	LOW
LPC	Concessions from natural resources (timber); logistical assistance from Ecomog	Combat soldiers are not paid; Looting not prohibited	MEDIUM
Ulimo-K	Assistance from Guinea	Loot for all	MEDIUM
Ulimo-J	Control over diamond mines	Known to pay soldiers in cash	HIGH
INPFL	Control of the Monrovia port (imported goods and food)	Paid soldiers in food	HIGH

Table A3. Determination of the Ethnic Persecution Values for Five Liberian Armed Groups

Armed Faction	*Access to Endangered Tribes w/o Alternative Protection Means*	*% CS Given Protective Reasons in My Survey*	*Ethnic Persecution*
NPFL	Defense: Gio, Mano, Loma, Kpelle Exchange: Krahn and Mandingo	34%	HIGH
LPC	Defense: Krahn and Mandingo; Sapo	50%	HIGH
Ulimo-K	{Loma and Kpelle joined LDF}		LOW
Ulimo-J	{No targeted people on its territories}		LOW
INPFL	{Alternative protection from AFL/Ecomog }		LOW

Table A4. Determination of the Ethnic Persecution Values for Five Liberian Armed Groups

Armed Faction	*Amount of Territory*	*Pool of Accessible People*	*Territorial Control*
NPFL	90% of Liberia but Monrovia until 1994; 6 counties in 1994-96	*900,000*: 761,000 in Liberia; 120,000 refugees	HIGH
LPC	6 counties	*700,000*: 500,000 in Liberia; 190,000-235,000 refugees	MEDIUM HIGH
Ulimo-K	1-2 counties	*300,000*: 60,000 in Liberia Large portion of 300,000-400,000 refugees in Guinea	MEDIUM
Ulimo-J	2-3 counties	*300,000*: 100,000-150,000 in Liberia; 150,000 refugees in SL; small portion of 300,000-400,000 refugee in Guinea	MEDIUM
INPFL	Contained to the base	{Most likely none}	LOW

Table A5. Territorial Control of Armed Factions and Ecomog in the First Liberian Civil War (1989-96)

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Montserrado	AFL/ Ecomog INPFL(Caldwell, Logun Town, New Kru Town, Duala, Via town)	AFL/Ecomog INPFL (Caldwell)	AFL/Ecomog INPFL (Caldwell) NPFL (outskirts; Logun)	AFL/ Ecomog			
Lofa	NPFL		NPFL; ULIMO	ULIMO	ULIMO-K (Upper Lofa); ULIMO-J (Lower Lofa		
Nimba	NPFL	NPFL	NPFL	NPFL	NPFL (part)		
Bong	NPFL	NPFL	NPFL	NPFL	ULIMO-K (Gbarnga); NPFL (parts)	NPFL	NPFL
Grand Bassa	NPFL (Buchanan, Roberts Field)	NPFL	NPFL	Ecomog (Buchanan)	LPC		
Maryland	NPFL (parts)	NPFL (parts)	NPFL (parts)	NPFL	NPFL (part); LPC		
River Cess	NPFL				LPC		
Bomi		NPFL	NPFL	ULIMO	ULIMO-J	ULIMO-J; Ecomog (Tubmanburg)	
Margibi	NPFL				NPFL (part)		
Sinoe	NPFL				LPC		
Cape Mount			NPFL; ULIMO	ULIMO	ULIMO-J		
River Gee			AFL	AFL	AFL	AFL	
Grand Kru			(NPFL)	(NPFL)	(NPFL); LPC	(NPFL)	(NPFL)
Grand Gedeh	NPFL (Zwedru)	AFL, NPFL	NPFL	NPFL	NPFL (north); LPC		

Sources: 1) "Liberia" in *Africa South of the Sahara 2004, Regional Surveys of the World* (Taylor and Francis Group, Europa Publications, 2004, 33rd edition); 2) Stephen Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy: The Destruction of Liberia and the Religious Dimension of an African Civil War* (London, UK: Hurst & Company Publisher, 1999); 3) U.S. Department of State, *Liberia Human Rights Practices, 1995*, March 1996, URL: http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/democracy/1995_hrp_report/95hrp_report_africa/Liberia.html (last accessed on November 17, 2008); 4) "Liberia Since 1980," in *Liberian Collections Project*, Indiana State University, URL: http://onliberia.org/liberia_since1980.htm.

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